



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

### Usage guidelines

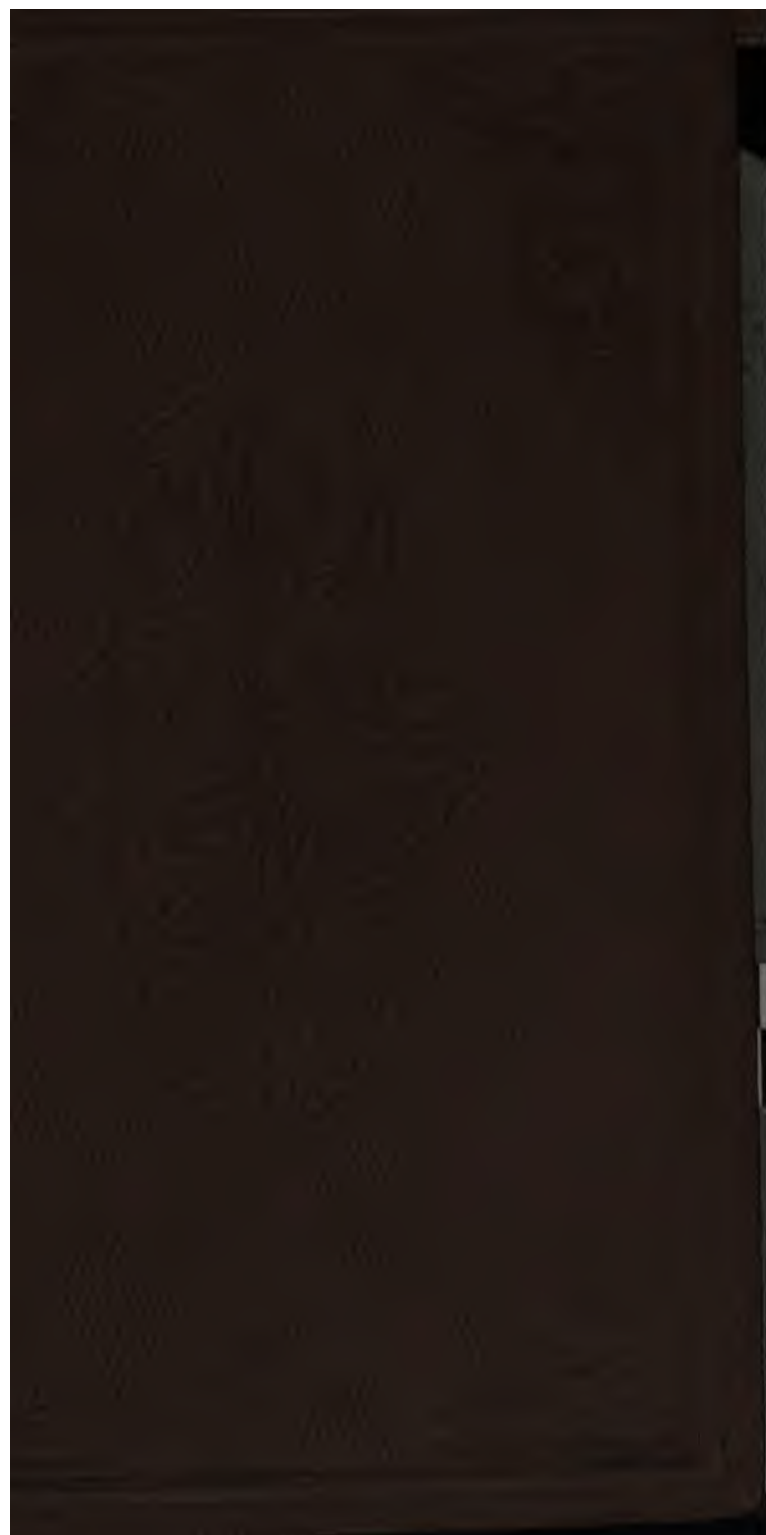
Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

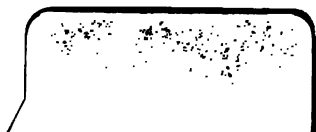
### About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>





600055980X







# OLIVER CROMWELL;

A STORY OF

THE CIVIL WAR.



BY

CHARLES EDWARD STEWART.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

SMITH, ELDER, AND CO., 65, CORNHILL.

---

1857.

*249. a. 617.*

[*The right of Translation is reserved.*]

LONDON :

Printed by SMITH, ELDER, & Co., 15, Old Bailey.

# CONTENTS.

---

CHAP.	PAGE
I.—CROMWELL THE FARMER.....	1
II.—THE OLD CAVALIER .....	16
III.—THE EXILE .....	31
IV.—THE COUNCIL CHAMBER .....	45
V.—THE RECRUITING OF THE GODLY .....	52
VI.—THE BEGINNING OF THE END .....	66
VII.—THE BATTLE .....	88
VIII.—THE UNSOLDIERLY SOLDIER .....	107
IX.—PRINCELY CONDESCENSION .....	120
X.—THE FAIR PURITAN .....	129
XI.—THE ESCAPE .....	147
XII.—THE RETURN OF MARGERY .....	159
XIII.—THE MASTER SPIRIT .....	179
XIV.—A PURITAN DECLARATION .....	205
XV.—THE COUNCIL OF WAR.....	212
XVI.—WILLINGHAM HALL GARRISONED .....	228
XVII.—THE WOOING OF ELIJAH .....	259
XVIII.—THE KING'S FLIGHT .....	277
XIX.—THE COUP D'ETAT .....	299





# OLIVER CROMWELL,

A STORY OF THE CIVIL WAR.

---

## CHAPTER I.

### CROMWELL THE FARMER.

IN the High Street of the town of Huntingdon stood, only a few years ago, a quaint old house, originally part of the buildings of a convent. It was, at the time of which we write, in good repair and condition, and fit for the residence of a substantial but not wealthy country gentleman. The rooms were not large, but sufficiently so for comfort;

very old-fashioned, with low ceilings and long beams running along and athwart them, and deep fire-places with high chimney-pieces. The furniture was rather old and stately, and somewhat scanty, though what there was of it was, good. The principal sitting-room was, what would be called in these days, comfortably furnished, but with an almost ostentatious gravity and decorum; it contained a book-case with a few books, chiefly polemical and political; a well-worn folio Bible lay upon the large oak table, and a vast leather-covered arm-chair, that two men would hardly have been able to move, stood by the fire-place; a few guns and a pair of horse-pistols; a few whips and spurs; and a few specimens of new agricultural implements, were scattered about: and this was all that there is to describe.

At the back of this house, in the year of our Lord 1630, there was a sort of out-building, half barn half warehouse; very much the sort of building that would at this day

---

be erected on a well-to-do farm, for thrashing out and storing the grain; and it had probably been used in former days for some such purpose: but in the year 1630 it was frequently applied by the owner of the house to a purpose more holy, if not more useful.

There, would sometimes be seen collected in the evening of a spring or summer day, a congregation of sunburnt and stalwart looking men, of dismal garb and still more dismal countenance, with close-cropped hair and out-standing ears, listening with eyes bent on the ground, or fixed with eager and searching looks upon the semi-clerical looking occupant of a little rostrum formed out of such rude materials as haste and thrift had permitted, while he poured into their ears the words of the Gospel, accompanied by much abuse and denunciation of the Royal and ecclesiastical powers that were. There also might be seen frequently among that crowd a rather tall and bulky man, of coarse and strongly marked features, whose broad and high forehead,

---

stern compressed lips, and large piercing eyes, seemed to belong to something more than a farmer or a moderately endowed country gentleman; yet he was then nothing more than the latter. Sometimes this individual would himself mount the rostrum, and, in a torrent of earnest and vehement language (of which, however, it was not—from the involution of his phraseology—always easy to catch the meaning), inveigh against the papistry of the Church and the Court, and feed his hearers with large morsels—or rather blocks—of Gospel teaching, which they bolted not the less greedily that they were somewhat indigestible. A specimen of his eloquence on one of these occasions may not be useless, as a key to the subsequent more frequent and more potent outpourings of the man.

“I tell you,” he said (after a good hour spent in the expounding of texts taken from the Old and New Testament, jumbled together in no very logical order, and coming at last rather abruptly upon the episcopacy),

“I tell you that there is no wholesome savor in the carnal teaching of these men. Yea, the food that they would feed us withal, is but as the self-seeking of Babylon; and the Word, which is strong meat for the hungry soul, is lost in the whirl and din of their popish ceremonies. And The Man, he whom they say God has put as a ruler over these poor kingdoms, is but an ally of the arch-apostate, who would catch the souls of men in the net of sin and superstition! Truly, our poor brethren, like the Son of Man, have nowhere to lay their heads; they are driven, I say, hither and thither, and in holes and corners such as this, are forced to seek the word that is to comfort their souls.

“But will God endure it for ever? Nay, I say, the rather that we are many, and gathered together in the Lord’s name, and that the strength of the Lord is with us, will we not in our generation gird our loins for the fight, and set this kingdom in order? so that men may worship God in their own fashion, and

not bow the knee to Baal, arrayed though he may be in purple and fine linen, with crosier in hand and lawn sleeves on his arms ! Lay these things then to your souls, my dear brethren, and let us be ready, when the day comes, to fight the good fight, and clear the land of the worshippers of Baal."

Much more did he say of the same kind, and not always so intelligible ; and when he finished with a prayer, or, as it was termed, an outpouring, at least as long and not quite so intelligible as the Litany, a deep "hum" of spiritual applause ran through the assembly ; and then the men dispersed silently, without greeting each other, and with the fire of enthusiasm glowing in their fierce eyes.

The orator and owner of the house was, I need hardly tell the historical reader, no other than Mr. Cromwell, then a country gentleman farming a moderate estate in the county of Huntingdon ; and his hearers were farmers and tradesmen of the neighbourhood, with a very minute sprinkling of smaller

gentry, of the Nonconformist persuasion ; men then hunted and persecuted, for conscience sake, by the high and intolerant Churchmen of the day ; men brooding over their spiritual wrongs, and gathering day by day those numbers and that strength which were destined, at no very distant period, to sweep away for a while the very foundations of royalty and of Church supremacy, and to give to both that blow, from which they never after recovered sufficiently to regain more than a moderate and law-begirt tenure of authority.

Mr. Cromwell, having delivered himself of his overflowing zeal, and dismissed his hearers to their homes with their spiritual appetites satisfied, turned slowly and thoughtfully to his immediately adjacent home, and entered his dwelling ; where his wife sat patiently awaiting him for the evening meal, in the room that we have described.

The supper—for it was that old and, it were to be wished, not so completely forgotten



English meal—partook of the solid and grave character of the times, and in particular of the sect to which the master of the mansion belonged ; two or three huge pieces of roast and boiled meat, bread and home-made cakes of various kinds, cheese, salt and pepper, and some tankards of potent ale (for the godly then in England, as well as in other ages and in other countries, thought it sin to reject substantial creature comforts,) formed the repast ; but neither vegetables of any kind, nor any light pastries, graced the table. Such things might be seen in those days, at the tables of the wealthy among the gentry of the Cavalier faction ; but they were not suitable to the pockets, and they were repugnant to the consciences, of the men who afterwards, with the Bible in one hand and the sword in the other, were to become the regenerators of England.

One guest only was present, the Rev. Abinadab Strongfaith, a Nonconformist divine ; a worthy man and a masterful, great in power,

and zeal, and reputation; and after he had pronounced a blessing, the length of which was not so important, inasmuch as the meats were cold, the party betook themselves to their repast: and, sooth to say, did it as much justice as if they had been mere carnal men, seekers after vanity. The supper over, a moderate supply of punch, brewed in a silver bowl by the fair hands of Mrs. Cromwell, was placed upon the table, together with a few long clay-pipes and a supply of tobacco, by a comely but preternaturally grave and staid-looking serving wench, who filled, in Mr. Cromwell's household, the department of baker and dairy-maid, and what we should now call also parlour-maid; and while Mrs. Cromwell betook herself to some task of housewifery—probably the reparation of some rent in the garments of the future Protector—the gentlemen lighted pipes, and gravely sipped, and smoked, and conversed.

It must not be imagined, however, that, at that day, Mr. Cromwell thought and

spoke of nothing but religious or political matters. He was a farmer, and a keen farmer; and his companion, though a preacher, lived amongst farmers, and took in farming and farming concerns an interest second only to his interest in religion; so that their conversation was a curious intermingling of homely, and worldly, and spiritual subjects: as may be seen, indeed, even at this day among very ascetic people of very extreme religious views.

“Thy flock of wethers that I saw on the hill side, as I came to thy house,” said the Rev. Abinadab, “is a goodly and a seemly flock; where didst thou get the breed?”

“Truly,” replied Oliver, “the Lord has blessed me with increase. I got the stock from our neighbour, Jonathan Wildgrace; a godly man he is, and a good judge, reverend sir, of beasts and sheep. I have bred them on this farm, and truly they have multiplied unto us fourfold, even as the cattle and the sheep of Jacob were multiplied unto him—hum! But, alas! of what avail are worldly

goods, if a man cannot worship as it seemeth fit to his conscience?"

"Yea," said Abinadab, "it is truly but a gathering of riches unto greater damnation, if man seeketh not God in the right path; and while the King upholdeth the archbishop in his popish practices and his tyranny towards the poor hungering souls of the godly, this is scarcely a land for a Christian man to live in."

"Aye, truly," rejoined Oliver, "I have often bethought me that I would like to gather together my worldly goods, and, selling them, depart to some new land, where we might set up our tents in the wilderness; and, tilling the soil with our own hands, and gathering the fatness thereof, might worship in peace according to our consciences—hum!"

"Alack, my dear husband," interposed Mrs. Cromwell, "surely thou wilt not leave the home of our fathers! better times may come; and after all," she added, though rather timidly, "the King is not so bad as men would make him out. And if the Church-

men are rather high and intolerant, have they not been born and bred in the faith that they follow?"

"Madam," interposed the divine, with a kindling eye, and in a stern tone, "I see that thou canst not forget thy royal blood,\* and that thou art still in the darkness of iniquity. Bethink you, is the King lord and master of our consciences, because his father was king before him, and his father before him? Truly, indeed, the apostle saith, 'Thou shalt not speak evil of the rulers of thy people;' and the men of Belial quote that text: but did the apostle mean thereby that this nation is to be sold by a king into soul slavery? Nay; I profess, I think it is not so: and the text, well understood, meaneth not that, but only that the law should be obeyed; and doth not the King himself trample upon the law? Are we not, by the charters of our forefathers, a free and Protes-

\* Mrs. Cromwell was a descendant of a branch of the house of Stewart.

tant nation? and shall a King claim obedience to his will, when he would make this people worshippers of the scarlet one?"

"Thou sayest well," said Oliver, unmindful of the sharp tone of rebuke in which the homily had been administered to his wife: a species of licence which the Puritans very quietly permitted to their own divines, though against the slightest interference of bishops and curates they kicked with a stout and manly vigour. "Thou sayest well, reverend sir: no," he continued, rising and pacing up and down the small apartment, and talking rather to himself than to his companions, "it may not be for ever endured; the time will come, aye, the time *shall* come (and he stretched forth his arm as if he were grasping at some ideal truncheon) when this nation will be up and doing, and the high places thereof shall be made bare, and a ruler shall rise up who will settle the kingdom on a new foundation!"

"Hush, my beloved husband," said his

wife, seeing his flushed cheek and kindling eye, and taking him gently by the arm, "be not so moved : our reverend friend is safe, but thou knowest not by what enemies our house may be watched. It is not safe to speak thus."

"Not yet, not yet, at least, Elizabeth Cromwell," replied her husband, as he kissed her forehead affectionately ; and, resuming his seat, turned the conversation, which thenceforth became exclusively bucolic and pastoral.

Any one who could then have heard Oliver Cromwell discoursing on beeves and sheep, and grains, and draining, and the whole circle of existing farming knowledge, would have thought that his whole soul was a farming soul, and that he had no thoughts that were not absorbed in flocks and herds. Such indeed was, perhaps, at that period, the actual state of mind of that singular man. No man ever possessed so intensely the power of entire concentration of his faculties upon the business in hand ; and though his religious fervour had taken a deep hold of him, and the inborn

ambition of his mind was doubtless stirring in him vague thoughts of coming strife and coming rule, yet he was then a farmer; and he put his hand to the plough with all the zeal and all the oneness of purpose with which he afterwards put his hand to the helm of State, and ruled this mighty kingdom, as she never was ruled before—and, perhaps, never will be ruled again.

“If you are but drawing a corkscrew,” he is reported to have said to some young man (though I vouch not for the anecdote); “draw it with all your heart, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.” And truly so did Oliver ever draw his corkscrew.



## CHAPTER II.

## THE OLD CAVALIER.

THE mode of life which has been described as going on in the house of Mr. Cromwell was a type of the style of living and thinking and talking, of thousands of families among the yeomanry and smaller gentry of the country, and among many of the citizens of London and of other great towns.

A very different style of existence was that in the house of Sir John Willingham, a gentleman of ancient descent, and attached entirely to the royal party. Sir John was a person, for those days, of rather large means; that is, his estates were worth about £3,000

a year : a fortune fully equivalent, and probably more than equivalent, to £6,000 at this day, in regard to actual affluence and means of enjoyment ; and certainly much superior to it in regard to worldly and territorial importance. He lived principally at his country seat, pleasantly situated on the banks of the Thames, near Medenham, within sight of the remains of the beautiful old abbey, on the opposite bank to it, and looking over that broad amphitheatre of rich wood, which crowns the high ground lying between Medenham and Great Marlow and High Wycombe : Bisham Abbey, and its vast woods and broad and pleasant meadows, were in view from its side windows, and the Thames flowed almost at its base.

The house itself was one of those broad-fronted, straggling-looking buildings of which many relics are still to be found in England. The whole building was of grey stone ; the centre was rather recessed, and flanked by two tall towers with gable ends ; and the

whole façade was furnished with long thin casement windows, having something the look of loop-holes: intended originally, no doubt, for crossbows or musketry, and subsequently widened into windows. In front of the building was a large courtyard, with a square grass-plot in the centre, surrounded by a low stone wall; and some attempts at floriculture had been made in the shape of beds scattered about the grass-plot, containing such flowers as the low state of the art at that day permitted.

Along each side of the courtyard ran a range of low stone-built offices, constituting the stables, and the dwellings of grooms, horse-keepers, and out-door servants: the kitchens, and other domestic offices appertaining to the house, were thrown out at the back, so as not to impair the stately effect of the façade; and beyond them was a large walled garden, a portion of which was laid out in walks and beds in the ornamental style of the day; but the greater part of it was

devoted to the purposes of a kitchen-garden, for furnishing the wants of the worthy knight's family.

Surrounding the whole house, was a large park filled with old and noble trees, and containing no small quantity of deer and other game.

Sir John was a widower, with an only son ; his family consisted only of himself, his son, Hubert Willingham, and Miss Frankland, the daughter of an old brother officer (for Sir John, like most men of his rank, had served), who, having fallen under the displeasure of the King in the preceding reign, on account of his showing too great a leaning towards the new popular notions of the day, had been obliged, in order to save his person from the Tower and his estates from confiscation, to withdraw himself from England, submitting to have his estates sequestered "during His Majesty's pleasure." And His Majesty had never yet found it his pleasure to withdraw the sequestration from Colonel Frank-

land's noble estate; though he munificently allowed him to draw one-fourth of the rents for his own use and his daughter's subsistence.

Colonel Frankland had not been guilty of any actual treason, or even of any treasonable practices; but he had imbibed many of the feelings of the Nonconformists: owing, perhaps, in part, to his having married a lady whose family had espoused that party; and in the latter years of James' reign, he had so far committed himself and become obnoxious to the Royal anger, that in the reign of that Prince, his means of justification—had the King carried into effect the threat of committal to the Tower, with which he had visited him—might not have been sufficient to save him from the vengeance of the learned, but not very just or scrupulous, monarch. He accordingly made a merit of necessity, and having some good friends at Court, obtained immunity from personal hostility, by an arrangement with the modern Solomon; by which he surrendered his estates into His Majesty's

•

hands to be held in sequestration during the royal pleasure, on the understanding that a portion of the rental (which the liberal Jamie fixed at one-fourth) would graciously be paid to him while he resided abroad. This arrangement pleased James very well, as by it he got rid of a troublesome subject, and pocketed three-fourths of the income of a good estate ; and as James—who, as is well known, was not over courageous—did not like the presence of enemies, or even those who might become enemies ; and as he did very much like money, without being at all particular how it was come by, he never thought during his reign of recalling Colonel Frankland.

When Charles came to the throne, he was so soon beset by public difficulties and political intrigues, that the private demands of mere justice had but little chance of attention ; and hence, although if he had been left to follow the natural bias of his own mind, which though weak was not unjust, he would have looked himself into Colonel Frankland's case and

would have done him justice ; yet, being surrounded, as we have said, by political difficulties, and being also surrounded, as it was his fate ever to be, by ill counsellors, who were glad to keep the King from doing justice to one whom they considered an enemy, and who might become a rival, he had never had the rights of Colonel Frankland's claims properly brought before him. Charles, therefore, believing he was just, persisted in the injustice of his father ; thus, in this isolated case, doing as he afterwards did in a thousand other instances, from the same weakness and the same want of far-seeing policy,—converting a half friend into a bitter foe, and driving into open rebellion a man whose talents were dangerous, and who might by a better policy have been recovered as a fast friend.

Colonel Frankland had, on leaving England, committed his daughter Rachel to the care of his old friend Sir John Willingham ; being unwilling to drag her about with him in foreign wanderings, he hardly knew whither,

and anxious to secure for her an English bringing up; as he long entertained hopes of recovering his family estates and returning to finish his days in England. But time wore on, and some years had passed of the new reign, and he was still unable to return with safety to England; and unable, without returning and pleading his own cause, to obtain from his Royal master that due investigation of his claim which was necessary to his obtaining justice.

Meanwhile he spent most of his time in Holland, Switzerland, and Venice; being in all three countries, surrounded by republican institutions, and in the two former, in addition, by the freest and least episcopal forms of Protestantism. His habits of mind thus became more and more republican and anti-episcopal; and the galling sense of injury and injustice under which he laboured was not calculated to wean him from these views, to the cause of a Prince whose overt attachment to arbitrary rule, and whose obvious leaning even towards Romanism,



shocked the Colonel's political and religious tenets; while his personal conduct towards himself, was not calculated to temper such political feelings by the infusion of any strong sentiments of personal loyalty.

To return to Sir J. Willingham. His son and Rachel Frankland had grown up under his roof; they had, as children, played together and learned together, and as time crept on, and they grew to big boyhood and girlhood, the comparative seclusion in which they lived at Willingham Hall, their rambles in the beautiful surrounding country together, their community of interest in all that they heard or saw or were taught, produced its natural fruit. They were lovers, almost before they were of an age to know what love is. At the age of eighteen, Hubert Willingham went to Oxford, leaving Rachel a blooming, romping girl of sixteen; and when, after a twelvemonth, he returned, no longer a boy in feelings or looks, but an "Oxford man," and found the playfellow of

his boyhood shot up, in that important and wonder-working twelvemonth of a young girl's life, into the tall, slim, graceful, and somewhat stately young maiden of seventeen, both felt that their feelings were wholly changed: both felt that their love for each other was no longer what it had been; both felt that it was no longer child's love; and both began to reflect and to feel anxieties unknown before.

Colonel Frankland had ever kept up a close correspondence with his daughter. He had been passionately attached to her mother, whom he had lost shortly after his daughter's birth, and he strove, through distance and the forlornness of exile, to create in Rachel's mind and heart feelings of reverence for that mother's memory, and to strengthen in her that tie of affection for himself, from which he fondly hoped to derive happiness when he should once more visit his native land. His letters were not therefore mere formal effusions of parental regard and parental domi-

nation; in them he *talked* to his daughter: he bared to her his thoughts, his feelings, his opinions; he sought to mould and teach her, and he succeeded; and hence, although living in an atmosphere of loyalty and cavalierism, she grew up a thoughtful Protestant, and far from a blind worshipper of royalty.


Of this no notice was taken by either Sir John or his son, during the days of the young people's childhood; Hubert, indeed, often when they talked together, as young people will, of many things of which they are obtaining glimpses without fully understanding them, used to rally her on her puritanical and republican notions, and call her his pretty little crop-ear and round-head. But when he returned from college and found her a woman, and understood his own feelings for her, then bitter thoughts would come across his mind as he remembered the state of parties, and had a foreshadowing, both from what he heard among his seniors and from his own reflections, of what strife was being engen-

dered in his country: then, I say, bitter anticipations would cross his mind for the future, when the republican Colonel should return to England, and find the suitor of his daughter's hand in the ranks of that party for whom he knew her father entertained a strong political hatred.

Sir J. Willingham, though he lived, as I have said, much in the country, did not therefore live the life of a hermit. With ample fortune, his estates unencumbered, and no younger children to provide for, he had no motive for parsimony, and his tastes were social and even jovial; he kept, therefore, a liberal establishment, and saw a great deal of company of his own rank, frequently giving what in those days were called "brave entertainments:" what we should now call "grand dinner parties." Of course his society was chiefly, indeed almost exclusively, among the gentry of his own class and his own opinions, and the clergy of the Established Church; and, of course, also, what Rachel Frankland heard in

that society on subjects of religion and politics, was principally either severe animadversion or contemptuous ridicule of the puritanic and democratic faction.

Had she been bred, as Hubert was, a loyalist and a servant of the Church, the repetition of these ideas would have done with her as they did with him; they would have become by their repetition a creed, and seemed but the natural expression of perfectly natural and incontrovertible opinions. For, while to a mind to which a certain original *twist*, if I may use the expression, has been given, the repetition of ideas consonant to that bias only strengthens it; on the other hand, to minds to which a different direction has been given, the same repetition only serves to irritate antagonism; to set the mind to question the truth of dogmas so authoritatively, almost insolently, asserted and re-asserted; and to drive that mind further and further in the opposite direction. Hence, when Hubert heard the loyal, and royal, and



episcopal doctrines of his father and his father's friends as things of course, and was learning devotion to the throne and the Church *as a habit*, Rachel had been, by the antagonistic process in her mind, rebelling against the imposition of doctrines which her father's lessons had first taught her to distrust; and had been learning to canvass in her own mind their truth and soundness: and they were soon in her young mind found wanting.

Of this Hubert was fully sensible; and both these young people, though they now felt that their fate was more strongly than ever bound up in each other, felt also instinctively that there was a dark cloud rising up between them, and that the days of unconcealed affection and unmixed joy were passed and gone. Alas, that the heavings and agonies of the body politic should so act upon the happiness of individuals! But so it ever has been: and it would be as possible for the deep sea to be agitated without communicating motion to the ships that sail upon her

bosom, as for a nation to be agitated to its very core by political troubles, without wrecking the peace of thousands of those human vessels who are compelled to float on the political sea.

Such was the state of mind of Hubert Willingham and his sweet Rachel when the young man left home to return to Oxford; and though no word of love was spoken between them; though neither had ventured on the common subject of disquiet, their parting was that of betrothed lovers: and it was sad and full of foreboding.

## CHAPTER III.

### THE EXILE.

WE must now cast a retrospective glance over some of the public events that had preceded the period of the opening of this story, and which deeply influenced the fate of Colonel Frankland and his daughter.

The conduct and the result of the ill-advised and ill-managed expedition, which in 1627 sailed under the command of the Duke of Buckingham against the forces of the King of France, then besieging La Rochelle, are well known ; and there may seem something like retribution in the fate of Charles, when we recollect that his first foreign war was undertaken in aid of men,



who, however much we may now sympathise with them, were, in the language and according to the ideas of those times, but subjects rebelling against their lawful sovereign. A more disastrous expedition could scarcely have been conceived, if it had been sought to plan an expedition for the express purpose of failure; and, indeed, not unlike some military transactions nearer our own times, it seemed as if ingenuity had been exhausted to make the chances of success as hopeless as possible.

The selection of the commander was as bad as it was possible it should be. The Duke of Buckingham knew little or nothing of military affairs; his antecedent conduct, both as ambassador in Spain for the negotiation of the King's marriage, and afterwards as a favourite and minister of the King, had shown that he possessed neither the abilities, the temper, nor the discretion for command. Hot, impetuous, and licentious even for an age when *noble* licentiousness was tolerated as a disease

proper to high rank ; insolent and overbearing ; frivolous and vacillating ; he had not one quality for command. And this was the man selected, in a period of peculiar difficulty, to command an expedition, too small in force and too ill-backed by pecuniary resources to have succeeded, unless it had been led by one of those rare men who, by energy of character and clearness of head, can make two guns do the work of six, and convert an army of common soldiers into a band of knights. Such a man was not George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham ; and his expedition, ill-planned, ill-supported, and worse managed, failed accordingly.

When Colonel Frankland, in his exile, heard of its preparation, he bethought him that if he were to volunteer in the expedition and serve in it under so immediate a favourite and adviser of the King, it might forward his views of obtaining attention to his claims for justice, and pave the way for his return to England ; which he was beginning to desire

with an almost passionate longing, partly on account of his daughter, partly that he was weary to the very soul of exile and inactivity, and was beginning to suffer that real malady, which none but those who have felt it can understand, the *mal du pays*.

He therefore contrived to get on board the English fleet when it anchored off the Isle de Rhée, and introducing himself to the General, obtained permission to serve as a volunteer with the army. Among the officers of that little army, the majority were, of course, men drawn from the ranks of the nobility and gentry, and royalists in feeling as well as in outward service; but there were some whose minds were not unaffected by the opinions then beginning to spread, and who were at least half Puritans; and, though not yet republicans, were dissatisfied with the state of the Government, and particularly with the high tone of prerogative which the doomed monarch was taking in all public affairs.

With these men Colonel Frankland, himself

Protestant to the very verge of Puritanism, and more than half republican, naturally associated more readily than with the rest; and among them one in particular, the unhappy Felton, who afterwards acquired such sad notoriety, was the constant companion of Frankland.

Felton, probably in part on account of his opinions, but still more on account of his temper, which was gloomy and enthusiastic almost to a morbid degree, had served long, but without any adequate rise in rank. He was yet at mature age, in a very subordinate rank, and his temper, soured by disappointment, and certainly not cheered or softened by the religion of his sect, led him to view the state of public affairs at home with a degree of bitterness that he scarcely even affected to conceal in conversation. The consequence was that his reputation for disaffection spread, and came to the ears of the Duke, who not only therefore marked him as a man not fit for promotion, but treated him with a degree of

sternness and hauteur, which sunk deep in the already half morbid brain of Felton; and he brooded over these things till he came to look upon the Duke of Buckingham as his bitterest enemy, and to accumulate on his head the concentrated hatred which years of neglect and disappointment had engendered in his heart.

Felton and Colonel Frankland, however, being drawn together by a community of feeling on the subject of government and religion, though in other respects, and especially in temper, men of a very different mould, were so constantly together as to be considered as almost sworn friends and allies; and it could not fail to be noticed that their conversations were often evidence of what was then considered a very disaffected spirit. That it was rash and imprudent in Colonel Frankland so to identify himself with a marked man, when his own very object in joining the army was, by serving the King, to set himself right, is not to be denied: and if he had been the

cool, calculating, self-seeking sort of man out of which Fouchés and Talleyrands are made, unquestionably he would not have done so.

But he was not that sort of man. He was possessed of considerable abilities and perfect knowledge of his profession, but he was a man of warm, open temper, and of great energy of character; and he was an instinctive hater of all oppression and persecution. He saw, therefore, under the influence of that character, in Felton an ill-treated and persecuted man; and he "took to" him, as the expression is, with much the same feeling with which you will sometimes see, in a public school, a noble-hearted and unselfish boy take for his crony some persecuted butt, whom he loves not for his own merits, but for hatred of the tyranny that has made him a butt.

Notwithstanding, however, his association with Felton, his own frank, cheerful temper, his zealous discharge of all his duties, and, above all, his eminent usefulness in the unfortunate attempt at landing the force—in

drawing off the troops and stores with something like order, and saving, not only some of the munitions of war, but some portion of the damaged honor of the poor army and its commanders—recommended him so far to Buckingham, that he deemed it not imprudent to return with the army to England, in order to obtain an audience of the King and plead his own cause.

And Colonel Frankland remained in England unmolested, though still unable to obtain the desired audience, till the unhappy death of Buckingham. Of this event I am not going to inflict a description on my readers: most of them probably know its details as well as I do; and those who do not, may find them in Lord Clarendon's history, in Mr. Hume's, and in the various lives, or rather imperfect memoirs, extant of Cromwell; for a good life of the Protector has yet to be written.

The grief and rage of the King at the murder of his favourite servant were unbounded. And when Colonel Frankland, utterly unconscious

of any wrong, next ventured to forward to His Majesty a respectful petition for an audience, the answer was, that the King was apprised of his close intimacy with the murderers of the Duke; that in mercy to him he forbore to investigate his participation in the counsels of Felton; but that, if he desired his own safety, he would never again let his name be mentioned in the King's hearing, and would withdraw himself for ever to the continent.

The hint was too plain to be neglected, but the injustice was also too glaring to be forgotten or forgiven; and Colonel Frankland left England with a vow that, if things came to a rupture with the King—a rupture which he was too keen-sighted not to perceive was at hand—*his* sword should be cast in the balance against so weak and unjust a Prince.

In vain his daughter endeavoured to mollify his feelings. "My dearest father," she said (when he came to his old friend's to



take leave of her), "let not this bitterness sink into your heart. The King is misguided, and, alas, weak; but he is not vindictive, or at heart, unjust: and time will show him that you had no part in the unhappy tragedy which is now so embittering him against you."

"Rachel," replied her father, "talk not to me of the King's goodness of heart. Of what avail is mere goodness of heart in a King, if he has not the courage and the firmness to think and act for himself? If he is at the mercy of every breath of advice that any counsellor, chosen not for his wisdom but because he happens to please the King's eye, may pour into his ear, what safety is there for the rights of any man? what safety for the freedom of this nation? Such a King is unfit to rule: let him retire from his high place, and give way to those who can govern the land with a stronger and more just hand."

"But, dear father," urged Rachel, "you can-

not thus leave England alone, with your heart tortured as it is. I cannot endure the thought that you should be alone in a foreign land, while I, your daughter, am here basking in luxury and ease."

Frankland looked at her and shook his head mournfully. "You know not what you ask, my child," he said at length: "you know not the life of a poor exile: shunned by foreigners because he is poor and in exile; still more shunned by any of his countrymen, lest they should be contaminated by the leprosy of his disgrace; driven from one city to another, because in each he finds no rest and nothing but disquiet: it is not a life for thee, my sweet child."

"Yet, dear father, let me share it with you. Would not my dear mother?" she continued, her eyes filling with tears as she spoke; "would she not have insisted on going with you, and sharing and soothing your trouble? Let me, then, take her place and be the companion of your exile."

“Be it so, then,” replied her father, folding her in his arms fondly. “Yet I ought not to yield: it is selfish and unmanly; but I cannot resist thy pleading, Rachel.”

Thus it was settled that the father and daughter should together go into exile; and they did together go into exile: and thus it was settled that a man, whom family position and traditions would have probably made, notwithstanding the leaning of his personal opinions, an adherent and defender of the King in the coming struggle, should be converted, by the weakness of that King, into a bitter enemy of the throne.

“Ah,” may some of my readers doubtless say, “so it is ever with your demagogues and republicans! They have the freedom of their country on their lips; but it is their own personal wrongs, or fancied wrongs, that stir them to rebellion.”

And they would be right, if they would only substitute the word *men* for republicans and demagogues. It is true that for

one man who takes a course in public life from an unmixed love of his country, there are a hundred who take it from some feeling of personal wrong or personal interest: and why should it not be so? What are public wrongs and public interests, but the aggregate of private wrongs and private interests: and if men do revolt against tyranny or fatuity, because it wrongs them individually, is the tyranny or the fatuity the less to be censured, or the less mischievous? The wrong done by a Ruler to the individual, is a wrong done to the State; and it is because men, when they see a wrong done to their fellow subjects, know not whose turn it may next be to suffer that the wrong is sympathised with, and national hatred becomes engendered.

When Rachel and her father left England, towards the end of 1638, Hubert was still at College; and poor Rachel, though she would have given her life to have seen him, and have but one hour of sweet converse with him, feared, in her father's mood, to breathe any

word on the subject; for their departure was obliged to be too sudden and precipitate, to allow time for his exacerbated feelings at all to cool down.

## CHAPTER IV.

## THE COUNCIL CHAMBER.

LET us pass over a few years, during which the memorable parliamentary struggles had been taking place between Charles and his Parliament. In the interval the King had been endeavouring to press upon the Scots the adoption of episcopacy and a liturgy; not exactly the liturgy of the Church of England, but something very close upon it. The effort had been resisted at first, more by a dogged *vis inertiae* than by positive antagonism; but the Government had persevered, and roused

by degrees a deep hostility to the measure. The King, obstinate as he was himself, knew the obstinacy of his countrymen; and, partly from kindness of disposition, was personally unwilling to force upon the Scots a form of worship which he knew they hated; but his ministers urged him on.

It was towards the end of the year 1639, in this state of things, that a Council was held at the Palace, to deliberate on the question of finally enforcing the liturgy or abandoning it.

At the head of the Council table, on a chair somewhat raised above the rest, but with no other outward marks of supremacy, sat the King. His pale, oval face, his large, melancholy eyes, his flowing hair, and his plain, unostentatious dress, have been too often described by pens of greater mastery than mine. I pass them over. Many Privy Councillors were present, but nearest to His Majesty sat the gifted and fated Strafford, and the not less gifted but haughty Laud. Gravely

and solemnly, yet warmly, was the question debated, of the introduction into Scotland of the liturgy of the Church of England.

“Bethink you, my Lords,” said the King, after several of the Councillors had pressed the measure with more or less of earnestness, and more or less of reason, “bethink you well before you urge upon me this thing. My Scottish subjects are a determined and an obstinate race, and they are blindly attached to their uncouth worship. I fear they would rather let me take even their money than their form of worship from them.”

“If your Majesty,” said Laud, when the King had finished, “will hear what your poor servant has to urge, I will show such reasons as, I think, shall satisfy your Royal mind.”

“Speak on, my faithful servant,” said Charles, turning to him with one of those simple and affectionate looks which were so marked a feature of the King’s demeanour; and which all history supports us in believing



were the sincere emanation of a trusting and affectionate disposition.

“Sir,” continued the Archbishop, “these men are a stiff-necked generation: they have banded themselves together with a pretence of religion; but their true aim is to destroy the Church, and with it your Majesty’s throne. Their hatred is directed against all learning and piety; except the rude learning which they find in reading the Holy Book without understanding it, and the piety which consists in singing psalms and cursing all that is great and noble. If they have their way, farewell to the support which your Majesty’s throne receives from a learned and pious Church; and I tremble to think of the time when that support shall be withdrawn. They prate about the idle ceremonies of our Holy Church, and would have every tinker and clodhopper, who can barely read, expound the Word in his shirt-sleeves! What have such base knaves to do with the ceremonies and the forms which have been settled by learned and pious men under

the authority of the kings of this land? It is not for them to rebel against the restraints of the Church: restraints which are necessary, if we are to maintain in this nation any religion at all."

"And you, my Lord Strafford," said the King, turning to that nobleman; "what say you?"

"Sir," replied Strafford, "I view not this matter quite as His Grace does; yet I differ not much from his conclusion. I fear not that the love of these obstinate Scots for their sectarian worship will destroy this Church, of which His Grace is so worthy a head; but I do fear that if your Majesty yields to their obstinacy, they will but gather power and strength from the concession. Your Majesty's prerogative is assailed on all sides. Your Commons have ever grudged every pound that they munificently bestowed on your Majesty for the absolute emergencies of your government; they have questioned your Majesty's most undoubted rights, handed down

to you from time immemorial. This is not a time to yield feebly to the clamor of a few zealots to be freed from the wholesome trammels of government. I say they must be taught to submit; not because it is of import whether they pray in one way or another—I say this not irreverently, my Lord Archbishop—but because they must be taught to obey.”

The King’s judgment was not convinced by the arguments of his haughty Archbishop, and his despotic Minister: in fact, Charles really felt himself the father of his people, though he took an odd way of showing it. His feelings told him he was yielding to harsh counsels, and nourishing hatred where he would willingly have sought love; but he yielded, alas, in this, as in a thousand other instances, his own better judgment to the counsels of those around him. He would not listen to his feelings (as if feelings formed no part of a King’s attributes!) and he yielded; and that decree went forth which caused to

flow the first drops of the torrents of blood that were afterwards shed in the fearful struggle of the Civil War.

## CHAPTER V.

## THE RECRUITING OF THE GODLY.

WE must now return to our friends the Puritans, who will necessarily play in this story as prominent a part as they did in real history.

It was in the year 1641, and hostilities between the King and the people had commenced by the outbreak in Scotland "anent" the liturgy. In England the nation was on the eve of breaking out into war: and the Parliament and the King were both raising troops; both still at that time in the name of the King.

In a small public house in one of the villages of Cambridgeshire, Corporal Elijah Gideon had established his head-quarters with a recruiting party, for the purpose of raising "God-fearing servants of the Lord and of the Parliament." His real name was Bill Gittens, and he had been originally a drawer at a London tavern, and noted for his gift of the gab; but when the war broke out, and his master's custom falling off compelled him to give up business, Bill Gittens, casting about for a livelihood, fell in with some of the soldiers of the Parliament, and by them was persuaded to take service.

He was a clever fellow, and a tall and stout fellow, with a very grim countenance; and his gifts as a speaker—which he soon had a call to turn into the sober channel of Gospel expounding—coupled with his bodily strength and zeal, which made him quickly acquire the qualities of a good soldier, caused him to rise rapidly to the rank of corporal. In accordance with the spirit of the times, he dropped, to-

gether with the slough of his malignancy, the ungodliness of his paternal and baptismal names—converting the latter into the name of Elijah, as indicative of his prophetic spirit; and the former into Gideon, as indicative of his having shouldered the halberd as a soldier of the Lord.

Corporal Gideon was a horse soldier, or trooper as it was then universally called, in the regiment of horse in which Cromwell, then only Captain Cromwell, was serving; and he was engaged, by the orders of his Captain, in obtaining some fifty or sixty additional men for Cromwell's troop. His orders were rather characteristic. Captain Cromwell had sent for him to his quarters, previous to the corporal departing on his recruiting service, to give him personally his directions in addition to the ordinary written orders.

It would have been difficult for any one who had only known "Farmer Cromwell," to recognise in the thoroughly military-looking man called Captain Cromwell the same indi-

vidual. Not that he was what would be, in our day, called a smart-looking officer. I have no doubt that on parade in Hyde Park, he would have cut a sorry figure; for he was still, as he had ever been, a sloven: his clothes were not well made; his boots were too big; his baldric was slung across his chest any how; and his face and hands were not always clean. But there was an unmistakeable fighting look about him: there was more,—there was a look of thoughtful energy, a look of command, that made every one who came in contact with him, feel instinctively that he was a man who was doing work in earnest, and expected, and would have, others to do their work too; that he was a man, in fact, not to be trifled with.

At the moment when Corporal Elijah entered Captain Cromwell's room to receive his instructions, Cromwell was on his knees, before the rude pallet which formed at once his bed by night and his principal seat by day, and was indulging in one of those outpourings of the



spirit so common among the Puritan sect. He did not interrupt his prayer, nor even turn his head, as Elijah entered, but continued for some minutes to seek the Lord in the vehement and ejaculatory language of his sect. And if any gentleman of this day had heard him, he would have thought that a wilder, a more rambling, a more semi-frantic tirade, had never sounded upon his ear ; and he would probably have set down Oliver Cromwell as a dreamy and unsubstantial enthusiast.

As soon, however, as Cromwell had prayed, till either his ideas were exhausted or he was fatigued with his exertions, he rose, and brushing away the dust from his knees, turned round and addressed Elijah. Not a trace of the agitation that had swept over his passionate prayer was to be seen. His countenance was fixed, calm, and almost cold ; and he spoke with a tone and air of the most thoroughly prosaic business.

“ Corporal,” he said, “ thou comest for orders ?”

“Yea, sir,” replied Elijah as gravely and quietly, “I do.”

“Thou hast thy written instructions and authority,” said Cromwell, “to enlist men; but I have somewhat to say to thee beside. We want something more than *men*; we want men of a sort. Gentlemen and gentlemen’s sons,” he added, with something between a sneer and a sigh, “we cannot get; they fight for the King’s side. But we can get men with a *will*. Mark me, thou wilt not take every broken down fellow, nor every dull yokel that offereth himself. Get me men that fear God, and will fight with a purpose; and get me men of substance, if thou canst: men that can serve the Parliament, with good horses and good swords, at their own charges; but, above all, get God-fearing men. We must have a spirit in our troop, Elijah, that shall match the blood of the gentlemen: dost understand me?”

Elijah did, and said so; though he did not quite understand the flush that came over

Oliver's countenance as he spoke, nor the look of the large eyes, that seemed as if it were seeking something in the far distance. So he retired and set out on his duty.

Cromwell remained for a few moments when Elijah had left the room, still in an apparently dreamy state of mind. "Ay," he said, speaking to himself, "I will have such men in my troop as shall fight for the Lord's cause, and not for bare hire alone; and I will bind their hearts to me! and then—" he ceased, and turning himself to some military papers that lay on his table, was soon buried in their consideration; as if there was not, and never had been, anything else on earth to consider.

The corporal, in the exercise of his duty, had enrolled a score or so of good men, who were standing about in front of the little inn; or leading their horses, fine large bony steeds, with a touch of the Flemish breed in them—just the sort of cattle one sees in the battle pictures of Reubens. He himself, equipped

in full panoply, with his broadsword dangling from his belt, his huge pistols stuck in his girdle, and his iron cap on his head, was just concluding an harangue, which he addressed from the horse-block to a multitude of young farmers, who had gathered about, attracted by the martial show that they had heard of.

“Come, then,” said the godly and martial corporal, “come all you that would have the blessing of the Lord upon this poor nation, and crave that the malignants, who would sell our souls to the arch fiend, should be driven back with the sword, even as Joshua drove back the hosts of the Amalekites, when, at the blast of the trumpet, God struck their walls and delivered them into the hands of the smiters! Brave fights shall there be, indeed, when the famous Captain Cromwell shall bind his sword on his thigh, and mount on his war horse that neigheth and saith Aha! when he smelleth the battle a-far off! Brave fights and spoil of the Egyptians will there be, and

the fatness of the land shall be given to the saints."

"And now," he added, dropping, after the manner of his principal, the inflated and enthusiastic style of scriptural hodge-podge, which was the fashion of the sect, and reverting to the more natural and business-like tone of the English trooper, "now come, my fine fellows, with me into the hostelry, and we will, over a flagon of good ale and a rasher of bacon (always with moderation, as becometh the soldiers of the Commonwealth), go into these matters touching the service of the State."

Then getting down, and taking good care to make his steel scabbard clink and clash on the pavement in front of the door, he led the way into the taproom, where he was soon joined by half-a-dozen of the most earnest and valiantly disposed of the auditory; and they commenced one of those carouses not uncommon among the warlike Puritans, who, though they certainly did not get drunk so often or so

deeply as their opponents the Cavaliers, had a marvellous gift of imbibing and steadily carrying goodly quantities of liquor.

Gideon, in the course of a week or so, contrived to make up his complement of men—and good men for the most part; each man bringing a good horse, a good sword, and a good pair of pistols, and money wherewith to make up the rest of the equipment of a trooper: for none would he take who could not furnish these things; saying to others, “It is not fitting that the soldiers who are to fight the Lord’s battles should be as the mercenary spearmen of the malignants, but rather that they should be at their own charges, as men who fight for God and the common weal.”

Having collected his men, and got them into something like order, he commenced his march to join his regiment, then lying a few miles from Edgehill. When they arrived, towards the close of the evening, at the little town where he proposed halting, having

procured quarters for his men in the different public houses and such other places as he could find accommodation in for men and horses, he himself took up his head-quarters at the principal inn, with a few of his old and picked men whom he had brought with him.

The King's troops were now in fact not very far distant; yet the corporal himself well knew that they were not so near as for it to be possible for his little troop to be surprised. Nevertheless, in the dead of the night the battle call of trumpets suddenly rung through the town, as of a force at no great distance from it; and the tramp of horses was heard rapidly approaching.

Elijah started up in great apparent amazement, and dispatched his aides-de-camp instantly to rouse up his sleeping troopers in their quarters, with orders to rendezvous armed for battle at his head-quarters. Quickly were seen galloping up some of them fully equipped, and as the trumpets still rung out their defiant and screaming notes, and the tramp of cavalry

was still heard, more and more of Elijah's men came in, till about forty of the fifty were on the ground; and stalwart and bold men they looked, with fire in their eyes, and on their sunbrowned cheeks the exciting flush of first smelling the battle.

Slowly Elijah arrayed them in double file, and slowly he went up and down the two ranks, noting the bearing of each man; and as he saw the firm grasp of the bridle in the one hand and of the sword in the other, a grim smile stole over his features, and he gave vent to the Puritanic "hum," which the godly, having abjured swearing, had substituted for the oaths of the Cavaliers. When he had concluded his survey, he addressed his men.

"It is well:" he said, "ye be true men and fit to serve under our Captain; but ye are but forty, and we were fifty. Let us go and arouse the sluggards."

The men now began to scent a joke: a practical joke being by no means in ill-accordance with the habitual gravity of the Puritans;



and a few hints from one of the old stagers let them further into the secret. So away they went, and pulling one after another of the sluggish heroes who had not relished the blast of the trumpet, out of bed, they compelled them to dress and come out, carrying with them their arms, which the corporal would by no means allow them to put on. When they were collected, Corporal Gideon mounted his horse, and drawing up his men in marching array, again indulged himself in a speech.

“Truly,” he said, addressing the ten recusants: “ye are sluggards, and love not the Lord, or the work that he hath put us upon. Get ye to your homes, and leave it to better men to fight for the Commonwealth.”

With sheepish and downcast eyes they were about to retire, and take up their arms, and were proceeding to the sheds where they had stabled their horses.

“Nay,” said Gideon, “depart ye naked, and unarmed, as men of peace should be: these toys are fitter for our hands than yours;

and your swords and good horses may be needed for the Lord's service. Yet ye shall not depart unprotected, for I, even I will see that men of war shall guard your ways."

Whereupon, at a signal from him, two troopers rode out from the ranks for each man of the recusants, and placing him between them, they thus escorted him home, amid the laughter—or as near to laughter as good Puritans might go—of the rest.

"Of a surety," said the grim Elijah as the last of them defiled, "our Captain had rather have forty *good* men, than fifty *white faced*; and will rather thank me for these men's horses than themselves." \*

\* The anecdote that I have thus fastened on the imaginary Gideon, is well known as related of Cromwell himself.

## CHAPTER VI.

## THE BEGINNING OF THE END.

COLONEL FRANKLAND had remained abroad with his daughter very quietly till the period when the rupture between Charles and the Commons, had reached the point of actual hostilities. Not for one moment had he wavered in his determination to take arms for the Commons whenever that time should come ; and he had been for some time in correspondence with some members of the Parliament—men like himself, gentlemen of landed estate, who had taken their part because they saw, or at least believed they saw,

that unless the power of the Crown was curbed by the strong hand, there could be henceforth neither peace nor liberty in England.

But he had latterly been silent on the subject to his daughter, for he saw that it pained her to anticipate his joining in the turmoil of political strife and war, and he rather dreaded her gentle persuadings. She was therefore not a little surprised when one day, after their morning meal, he turned to her and said quietly, "Dear Rachel, I wish thee to get our few articles of value and necessity packed up as speedily as may be. We depart for England the morrow."

"To England? and to-morrow? my dear father? Wherefore? Is it safe for us to return yet?"

"Aye, child," he replied, with a grave look; "it is safe: at least I hope it may prove so; though, alas! we go to no peaceable land. And would that I knew where to leave thee here in safety, for assuredly then thou shouldst not go with me."

“Oh, my dear father,” cried Rachel, as the truth flashed across her; “do not, oh do not go, to embroil yourself in this frightful struggle! We have been exiled, and driven from our native land; there is no duty which calls upon you to quit the peace that we here enjoy, exile though it be, and to take part in this fearful, this unnatural war.”

“My daughter,” replied her father, “thou speakest as a woman, and I would not have thee speak or think otherwise: but *I* cannot so either speak or think. I am a soldier; I was bred a soldier, and have been one from my youth upwards. And is this a time, when every man in England with hair upon his lip and the heart of man in his bosom, chooses his part,—is this a time for an old soldier to lie rotting in sloth, while the fate of his country is being decided? Answer me not; seek not to persuade me,” he said, seeing that she was about to interpose with her sweet remonstrance; “my part is chosen: the die is cast. See here,” he added, pointing to a packet bear-

ing the seal of the Speaker of the House of Commons; "I am offered the command of a regiment in the army of the Commons, and I have already written to accept it. Tomorrow we depart. Would that I could sooner: I may still be too late for Edgehill."

Rachel departed to make the necessary preparations for their journey, with a heart too full to speak further words. Alas! what she had always so dreaded was coming to pass: her father was about to plunge into strife and danger, and he and her lover would be in the opposing armies. They might be brought by the fate of war into actual personal strife, and the sword of the one might be drawn against the life of the other. It was horrible to think of, and she strove to shut out the dreadful idea; but in vain.

Oh that sickness of the heart that comes over us, when thus undefined yet probable evils are hanging over our destinies! The certainty of danger, or of evil, is as nothing compared to it; then, with the certainty,

come courage and antagonism : the mind contemplates the danger as a thing to be met, to be fought and quelled, or to be borne. But an evil that looms in the distance, shadowy yet distinct ; trebly frightful because we cannot measure its intensity, hangs over the spirit like a dark and indispersable cloud, crushing hope and energy and strength, and making the heart sick even unto death.

Rachel was, however, religiously trained ; and, in her, the reliance on God, which was so often on the lips of her sect, and only on their lips, was deep in the inmost heart. She sought in earnest prayer for strength, and she found it ; so that when she rose from her knees, if not happy, she was not without a feeling of internal strength and resolution, which enabled her to go cheerfully through the duties that she had to perform for her father, and to meet him, when he returned home, with a cheerful and resigned countenance.

“ I see, my Rachel,” he said, as he kissed

her, "that thou hast been seeking refuge where it is not denied to the earnest heart."

"Truly I have, dear father ; thou knowest thou hast thyself taught me where to ask for counsel and strength, when none on earth can give it us ; and I trust I have not forgotten thy lesson. When do we depart ?"

"To-morrow at break of day. I have procured horses for ourselves and our servant, and by the evening I hope to be at Dunkirk, where we may find shipping for England."

"England," he went on speaking to himself ; "England, my beloved country ! and in what a state shall I find thee ? Brother against brother, and father against son, and the dearest ties of kindred and friendship broken for years, perhaps for ever ! Oh kings, kings, to whom the fate of nations is committed, as ye impiously say, by God, what have ye not to answer for, if from the lust of power, or still worse, from weakness, ye neglect the sacred charge, and leave bad men to embroil a nation in the horrors of civil war !"



During the last few years of their sojourn abroad, Rachel had been entirely without news of Sir J. Willingham and his son, except such as casual travellers from England brought. In those days, not only there were no railroads, but, as I need hardly inform my readers, there were scarcely any roads at all, except those connecting the great capitals with each other, and with the coast. Post was not either; and communication between people living in different countries was, under the most favourable circumstances, difficult.


But, in addition to these difficulties, there was subjoined, in the case of the Franklands and Willinghams, that arising from the distracted state of England, and the fact of their being, though old and close friends, of opposite factions. In consequence of this, and of the peculiar position of Frankland as a proscribed man, he had, soon after his second exile commenced, and when he found that civil war was approaching, written to his friend to say that it was better for them

both that they should not correspond till better times; for he shrunk from compromising his old friend by placing him in correspondence with one whom he knew the King looked upon as little better than a traitor; and he felt that their correspondence, with their mouths shut on both sides on that subject which was uppermost in the minds of both, could but be *gêné* and painful.

Hence, as I have said, beyond hearing from time to time through casual travellers that Sir John and his son were living, that Sir John was an active partizan in purse and influence of the King, and that Hubert had on leaving college entered the army and was serving the King, Rachel knew nothing of Hubert's existence. Never in her heart did she once doubt his unswerving faith to her: she judged from her own heart, and she knew that for herself she cherished the memory of his love as the one comfort of her desolate life. But still anxiety for *his* fate, dread of their mutual future—in

particular, a dread of that very strife in which he and her father should feel, and perhaps might meet, as enemies—had worn her spirits and taken the bloom from her cheeks; and though beautiful—perhaps more beautiful than ever from the refining process of suffering on the countenance—she was not the dazzling, resplendent beauty that had left England only a few short years before.

I do not propose in this tale to fret the impatience of the reader with dangers by land and dangers by sea: I do not propose either to break down carriages, or to throw my heroine from horses; first, because carriages were not, and therefore could not break down; secondly, because, though horses were, my heroine was a good horsewoman, and performed her journeys without committing the *bêtise* of being kicked off; and thirdly, because the public events with which I have to deal, as influencing the private history of my *dramatis personæ*, are so abundant and stirring that I shall have enough to do to




deal with them, without creating imaginary drownings, or falls, or breaks down, for the purpose of effecting romantic rescues and sentimental recoverings.

Suffice it, therefore, to say that Colonel Frankland and his daughter left their place of refuge, travelling on horseback according to the then usual custom; that they ate breakfast, and dinner, and supper very rationally and very hungrily, preoccupied though their minds were; that they procured a passage to England without any extraordinary difficulty, and arrived there safe at the end of the fourth day from their departure (a journey and passage, by-the-bye, for those days, of rather extraordinary dispatch); and all without any adventures or any sufferings, except abundant sea-sickness: an evil against which the most heroic and chivalrous mould of brain rarely protects the stomach, whether it be a royal stomach or a merely patrician one, or a stomach of the coarsest plebeian structure.

But once in England, difficulties and dangers soon began to surround them. Colonel Frankland's first care was to provide an asylum for his daughter; and that asylum he sought, at his earnest request, under the roof of his old and tried friend, Sir J. Willingham. He had written to Sir John, on determining to return to England, and the reply had been to press him to place his daughter under Sir John's care.

"You know, old friend," said the worthy knight in his letter, "that you and I cannot, in these unhappy times, meet as friends. As yet, *our* cause is uppermost, and my house is a safer protection for Rachel than you can offer her. Should the tide of war turn against us, you may be able to protect her better; and if the fortune of war drives me into the exile that you so long endured, it may be a plea for you to obtain the control and possession of Willingham Hall, that it is your dear little Roundhead daughter's residence. If *any* Roundhead is to tread with



the foot of a master in my father's hall, I would rather it were you, who are a gentleman, though a rebellious one, than some such fellow as the tailor Joyce, or the butcher Harrison, or any other of the rapscaillon crew (forgive me, old friend) with whom you have cast your fate. Therefore I will hear of no refusal; and, besides, I want to see my dear little ward Rachel."

The offer was too obviously the result of true friendship, and the policy of the course proposed was too plain, to make it a matter of hesitation; and accordingly Colonel Frankland journeyed as rapidly as he could towards Berkshire. But the state of the country was so disturbed, the towns and villages were so stripped of horses and provisions for the contending forces, that to journey rapidly, except with a military retinue, was nearly impossible; and the more so to Colonel Frankland, that, as he approached Willingham Hall, he was necessarily thrown near the outposts of a detachment of the King's army, then on the march to join him in

Warwickshire; and straggling parties of royalist soldiers and officers had to be avoided, by detours and delays, harassing as well as full of danger.

Nor was the character of the Royalist officers and soldiers at that time such as to make any prudent man, having a lady under his escort, particularly anxious to fall in their way; even if he were not a known partisan of the opposite faction. Recruited any how—and among all classes of the people, owing to the necessities of the King—though there were among the officers many gentlemen of birth and conduct, there were also too many of those rakehell soldiers of fortune—broken down *roués*, the ejected of the taverns of London—who thought they showed their devotion to their royal leader by being as opposite as possible to his enemies; and who therefore, *because* the Puritans affected great sobriety and gravity, considered it their part to affect the most outrageous license and the grossest debauchery. While, therefore, the Puritan army

was kept under strict discipline, and no man was suffered to swear or to be drunk, or to take supplies without paying for them, the Royalist army scoured the country, marking their passage by contempt of all the decencies of life; pillaging the peasantry as though they had been in a hostile territory, and undoing, by the hatred they created against the King, all the good that twenty Ruperts or Newcastles could do him by their military talents.

Colonel Frankland had arrived at Remenham, which, as my readers will recollect, is on the opposite bank of the Thames to Medenham, too late at night to proceed to his friend's house till the next morning, and was fain to seek food and rest for the night at the little inn; then the only inn in that small village. As he dismounted, and helped his daughter from her horse, he was surprised and vexed to see in the courtyard half a dozen troop horses standing picketed, with their girths loosened and their bridles thrown over their necks. Obviously there was a party of military in the



house, and he was not long in further being certified of the fact that it was a party of the Royal horse, by the bacchanalian roar which ever and anon issued from the inn parlour, as some jest or song passed round among the merry inmates thereof.

To the civil inquiry made of the host, whether he could have a private apartment for himself and his daughter, Colonel Frankland received a somewhat curt reply, that there was no room fit for the young lady to sit in, except the parlour, and that was occupied by a party of gentlemen of the King's troops; but that she might have a bedroom, and there be served with supper, and he, the gentleman, must take his chance in the parlour. To take his daughter into such an assemblage was out of the question. Himself to keep out of the way, was, perhaps, worse; it would excite suspicion and, perhaps, endanger his personal freedom. So he made up his mind to accept the host's offer; and, having seen his daughter ushered up by the

serving wench to her chamber, and given directions for her comfort (directions for the carrying of which into effect he took the very common but very politic precaution of placing in the hands of mine host a gold Charles in advance), he desired him to request of the gentlemen in the parlour permission for a traveller to join their party. The royal officers happened to be most of them really gentlemen; and notwithstanding the opposition of two of their number, who were of the worst class of that army, they sent a courteous reply begging the company of the stranger.

Colonel Frankland entered and, bowing, expressed his thanks, and requested that when he had partaken of some refreshment he might be allowed to join them in their wine party: not that he cared for drinking wine as they were obviously doing, to the extent of a debauch; but that he preferred being with them and keeping them engaged, to allowing their curiosity to be excited about

himself and his daughter, which he knew well would be the case, if he withdrew from among them.

While eating, with real appetite and apparent unconcern, the supper that the host placed before him, he became aware that the eyes of one of the party were frequently fixed upon him; and he fancied he recognised the face, though he did not immediately recollect where he had seen it. But the continued scrutiny at last became painful and irritating; wherefore, ceasing from his meal, he addressed himself quietly to the officer so offending, saying,

“I suppose, sir, you recognise in me some fancied likeness to an acquaintance. May I ask whom I have the honour of addressing, as I profess I have not the advantage of recognising your features?”

“My name,” replied the officer in a bullying and not very steady tone, for he was already verging on intoxication, “is Captain Slasher, of His Majesty’s 4th Regiment

of Dragoons: what have you to say to that?"

"Nothing whatever, Captain Slasher, except that if you know me, I would be obliged by your recalling our acquaintance to my recollection; and, if you do not, I would ask of your courtesy to let me sup in peace."

"And who are you, sir," replied the Captain with increased insolence, "to come among us and be so damned big? By God, I would slash the nose of any cursed Roundhead if he had said half as much, were it not for his being a sort of guest. But who are you, sir, who are you? These are not times when men can be allowed to come into a private room and hear the conversation of gentlemen, and not tell their own names!"

"My name," said Colonel Frankland, "must be perfectly immaterial to you, and I protest against being thus pressed. Gentlemen, I appeal to you all, whether this is the hospitality you intended?"

"No, by my faith, it is not," said the

elder of the party, an officer obviously of rank. It is too bad, Slasher, to intrude thus on the gentleman's private affairs: it must not be!"

"*Must* not be—must not be!" hiccupped the now thoroughly excited as well as half drunken Captain. "Do you know who this man is? I will tell you; it is no other than Colonel Frankland."

"And if he were Colonel Frankland," said the latter, fixing on him his eyes with a look of scorn, "is Colonel Frankland not fit company for Captain Gehazy?"

The Captain turned livid with passion—perhaps, with other feelings,—and, half drawing his sword, made a movement towards the Colonel; and, then turning still whiter, thrust it back.

"Put up your sword, sir," said the Colonel with provoking calmness and a look of overpowering contempt; "Remember the Isle de Rhée, and do not provoke me into betraying you. You may have an opportunity at Edge-

hill of making it worth the while of a gentleman to cross swords with you;—at present you know it is not.”

But by this time the matter had become serious. Colonel Frankland was well known to be in England, and to be holding a commission in the Parliamentary army, and the King's officers felt themselves in a sort of fix. If they did their *military* duty, they ought to arrest him as a prisoner; if they did their duty as *gentlemen*, he was their guest, and they could not avail themselves of an accidental discovery. They looked very puzzled. At last, Colonel Frankland spoke,

“Well, gentlemen, am I to consider myself still your guest, or must I quit the comfort of the only room in the house after a long journey?”

“Sir,” said the elder officer after a pause; “our friend here, who now seems sobered, has called you Colonel Frankland: if you were, indeed, Colonel Frankland, it would be our duty to arrest you; but I have not heard

you say that such is your name; and I think," he added, turning round to the other officers, "that we, none of us, ask or desire to know your name. Join our party as what you appear, a stranger; and I feel sure from what I see in your bearing, that, should the fortune of war require it, you will be as discreet towards any supposed friends of the King, as we now are to a supposed friend of the Parliament."

Frankland gladly accepted the invitation so cordially given, and when towards midnight the royal officers, not a little to his satisfaction, mounted their horses to rejoin their camp, a friendly parting took place between him and the party; with the exception of Captain Slasher, who had sat at the table during the rest of the evening, silent and moody, and stood aloof when the hour of separation arrived.

The next morning Frankland conducted his daughter without further adventures to Willingham Hall; and, after such brief interview

with his old friend as prudence allowed on both sides, departed ; leaving Rachel once more under the roof that had sheltered her childhood, and with which all her happiest memories were connected.



## CHAPTER VII.

## THE BATTLE.

STRIFE was in the land, and strife must be the *pabulum* of this story; for, as the hands cannot touch pitch and not be defiled, neither can human beings live in a land torn by the convulsions of civil war, without breathing an atmosphere of violence and agony, and being dragged, whether they will or no, into the whirlpool of confusion that seethes and boils in the very heart of the waters of their destiny.

The eager farmer of our first chapter had

departed, never more to be seen as such in England; he had cast his bucolic slough, and was now the man of war, the scheming politician, the organiser of regiments. He was still occasionally the preacher; for the custom of the Puritans to crave "a word in season," and to like it as well out of the mouth of a man cased in iron as from the lips of one clad in a black cloak, had led officers and men alike, at times to hold forth to their men or comrades; and many a long sermon was thus preached in the guard house, or on the eve or after the issue of a battle; the greed for doctrine appearing in those days to be almost as insatiable as the greed for blood.

The contending armies of the King and the Parliament were encamped near Edgehill, in Warwickshire, and the first pitched battle of the civil war was being on both sides prepared for. Many petty skirmishes and small encounters there had been already, in which the fortune of war had leaned sometimes to one side and sometimes to the

other, but more frequently had favoured the Royalists. The master spirit that was at no very distant day to rule the army of the Commonwealth had been, in the meantime, developing its power, and beginning to breathe its fire into the Parliamentary army. The care with which Cromwell had selected the soldiers for the regiment in which he served, and the confidence in his ability and his good fortune with which he had already succeeded in inspiring the troops immediately under his command (for it was also noted that he had never, in any skirmish in which he was personally engaged, failed to be successful), was beginning to tell on the affairs of the army. The composition of the King's army at Edgehill was, however, still superior to that of the Parliament forces.

On arriving at the camp, only a few days before the battle, Colonel Frankland was at once, on giving his name, welcomed with joy, by many officers with whom he had served in former times and under a different

banner, and was conducted to the quarters of Essex, the Lord General, to receive his commands and his orders.

“Welcome, brave friend,” said Essex as he entered, holding out his hand; “we have need of strong hands and clear heads at this time for the coming struggle, for it will be no child’s play: Rupert and Lindsay, as you doubtless know, command the King’s army, and they are both good men and true. But what news of your fair daughter, Colonel Frankland? I well recollect her mother, and I remember Rachel as a child: I trust you have cared well for her safety; for though we mean to conquer, no man can say what the issue of a fight may be.”

“Thanks, my Lord, for your kind welcome, and still more for your kind recollection of my daughter. I have placed her under safe and almost fatherly care. If I fall, she will still have a father.”

“And yourself,” said Essex, “I trust you come amongst us with a knowledge that, now

the sword is drawn, the scabbard is thrown away. Many things have passed, of the which you could only hear in your exile through the diluted reports of rumour, that have made this war a war to the death. There is, I trust, no lingering favour in your heart for the King, to cool your zeal. Pardon me," he continued, as he saw Colonel Frankland's countenance grow dark at the slight implied suspicion, "had you been amongst us always, I should never have asked you such a question; but methought you might not know as well as we do—who have, alas! seen this war grow out of feuds interminable—that it is King or people, and that one or the other must be destroyed."

"My Lord," replied Frankland, "I came not to join this war until I had well satisfied myself that I would join in it with all my poor strength, and with no respect for persons. I have no enmity to the King—though, God knows, I have not much reason to love him—but, if we should meet on the field, I would

as soon discharge my pistol at the King as at any trooper."

"Enough," replied the General, "I understand thee. I doubted not thy mettle: none who know Colonel Frankland could do that; I only sought to see whether thou didst really understand that this is a war *ad internecionem*. We are alone," he added, smiling; "or I could not venture on quoting even two words savouring of the heathen: bear that also in mind, my good Colonel. I know thou art a stanch Protestant; but our men are something fond of texts and nothing else; and thou must not show too much of the carnal knowledge that we imbibed in classic groves in days of yore."

"Fear me not," said Frankland, "I will be as ignorant as the best of them; if thereby we can sooner bring this war to a happy conclusion, and settle the government on a footing that shall indeed insure liberty."

"There is much to do first, I fear," said the General; "and we may pass through

worse than we have yet seen before we arrive at better. For the present, however, we are but soldiers; and to fight is our business. So away to your quarters and assume the command of your regiment: we shall meet again in the field." So saying, he dismissed him to his duties.

A grim set of warriors they were, those famous old Puritans, who prayed instead of joking and cursing, as they ground their swords and scoured their breastplates: they believed, most of them at least, that they were in truth called to their work by the God of battles, and therefore prepared for it with the feeling that one may imagine in the youthful David, when he feared not the gigantic Philistine, *because* he was the servant of the Lord.

A curious contrast there was between the mode in which the night preceding the battle was spent in the two camps. In the Puritan camp, the cleaning of casques, cuirasses, and muskets, the grinding of swords and pike

heads, the repairing of bridles and saddles, and horse-girths, by the men ; the grave, watchful, and yet keen examination by the officers into the condition of the men, and of their arms and appointments, were only relieved by the occasional singing of psalms and pouring forth of doctrine unto edification ; when a knot of the men, having done all that man could do in the way of practical precaution, trusted the rest to Providence, or, in their language, “ cast their burthen upon the Lord,” and would divert themselves in their pious though somewhat uncouth way, with their very nasal psalmody, or extempore preachments.

And though the army was well provisioned, and the officers took care that abundance of substantial rations and needful drink should be served out, that the men might be strengthened for their work, the suppers were eaten gravely, and almost silently ; or amid grave and solemn converse, more like that of a set of monastics than of dare-devil soldiers.



In the Royal camp, on the contrary—though, with such men as Rupert and Lindsay at their head, military precautions were not neglected—they were taken in the midst of a jovial and rollicking gaiety; and, when they were completed, the camp resounded with songs and merry toasts and revelry; and many of the officers and soldiers drank confusion to the Roundheads, till they knew not whether their own heads were round or square.

Not that all this made them actually unfit for their duties the next day. Accustomed to frequent and deep potations, a thorough-bred Cavalier could have fought almost as well drunk as sober; and bravery, common to all Englishmen, was not scarce in the Royalist army. Still the effect of wine and wassail and boisterous excitement of the spirits, does not so string the nerves as the deeper, the graver, and more quiet excitement of prayer and stern enthusiasm; nor is it so productive of discipline in action, though it may be consistent with much greater discipline in camp or on

parade. Ridiculous, therefore, though the praying and psalm singing of our Puritan ancestors may seem to us at this day, it did not prevent them from being—nay, it rather aided them in being—the hardest fighting men that the world has ever seen; as their more mercurial opponents often found to their cost.

Sunday, the 23rd of October, 1642, dawned with a bright autumnal sun. Alas! how many of the brave men who buckled on their armour on that morning looked upon its rays for the last time on this earth. The Royal army, some say 14,000, some 18,000 strong, had the advantage of occupying the high ground called Edgehill, looking down on the little town of Kington. The infantry, divided into nine detachments, was a little in advance of the wings; the right wing being composed of a powerful body of horse, under the command of Prince Rupert, and their left wing of another body of horse of less strength.

The position of the Parliamentary army was taken up in the vale of the Redhorn, a

large broad field stretching out at the foot of the hill, intersected with hedges and ditches ; which were lined with musqueteers to harass the King's troops as they charged. Their force did not number much more than 10,000 men ; their right wing comprising eighteen troops or three regiments of horse, and their left twenty-four troops ; the infantry and artillery were disposed much in the same way as that of the Royal army. Long time it took in those days to move bodies of men into action ; so that, though the King's vanguard was on the hill as early as ten o'clock in the morning, the rear and artillery, although not more than four miles from Edgehill, were not brought up till between two and three o'clock in the afternoon.

About three o'clock then the battle began, as the annalists of the period say, by a little playing with the cannon on both sides, and then the left wing of the Royalist cavalry charged the right wing of the enemy : and dazzling and knight-like indeed they looked, as, descending

the inclined ground at the *pas de charge*, with the royal banners floating, and the bright casques and cuirasses of the soldiers glittering in the deep glow of the autumn sun, amid the clang of trumpets and the thundering tramp of the heavy horses,—they charged furiously the cavalry opposed to them on the right of the Parliamentary army.

The fate of the battle seemed almost instantaneous: firm as the Parliamentary soldiers were, they were withal somewhat slow; and, not prepared for such a furious onslaught as they received, they gave way after a short encounter, and were driven in in disorder, falling back upon their own infantry and disordering them. In vain the commander of this force, and Colonel Frankland and his other officers, endeavoured to keep the men together and to rally them: it would not do; in vain Essex himself, despatching a body of the left wing to support them, endeavoured to turn the tide of war; in vain the musqueteers endeavoured, from

their position behind the hedges, to cut the Royalist soldiers up. On they rushed, bearing everything before them ; the Parliament men, deaf to the voice of their officers, scattered about the field, driving in the centre of their own infantry, and even breaking, for a time, in their disorder, the compact ranks of the reserves on which they fell back ; while Rupert and his Cavaliers hotly pursued them, cutting them down, to a distance of several miles.

Frankland had, indeed, succeeded in rallying a handful of his regiment, and with it firmly stood his ground against a troop of the Royalists, commanded by a very young man in the rich dress which young officers of birth then wore ; and inch by inch the gallant soldier and his little band disputed the ground, till overpowered by numbers, and almost surrounded, there was nothing before then but death or surrender.

“Yield ye, Colonel Frankland !” shouted the young commander of the Royalist corps,

pushing his horse forward in front of his men ; "yield, and spare English blood : enough thou hast done for honour !" The only answer of the Colonel, who did not know his opponent as well as he was known, it seems, was a furious blow with his broadsword, which would have made serious havoc with the young officer's casque, fine steel though it was ; but, at the same instant half-a-dozen of the troopers galloped forward in support of the Captain, and a ball from a firelock, shot from the very centre of the troop, struck the gallant Colonel on the shoulder, and hurled him from his horse to the ground. Instantly a tall officer, galloping up, sprung off his horse, and, with the look of a demon, made a lunge at him as he lay. But Hubert Willingham, for it was he, was too quick for him.

"Back, Captain Slasher !" he shouted, seizing him by the sword arm, "back, sir. *I* command here, and this gentleman is my prisoner ! Lift him up, men," he said, turning to the soldiers surrounding him, and bear

him to the rear: the King's men do not kill a fallen soldier."

The rest of the men coming up, cheered their commander, and Captain Slasher, abashed, slunk back into his place; from which indeed, as the men, joking among themselves, observed, they had never before seen him move forward so gleefully. But their Colonel taken prisoner, the rout of Frankland's regiment was as complete as that of the others had been for some time: they made no further attempt, but fled in disorder.

Thus broken, the Parliamentary army must have suffered a complete defeat, had the Royal officers possessed as much conduct as they did courage; but the Prince and his officers, hot in the pursuit with his horse, forgot that, though the centre and the right wing of the enemy was broken, their left was still in compact order; and, while the greater part of the Royalist cavalry were thus thundering after the conquered troopers of the Parliament, themselves were, in the heat of the pursuit,

becoming broken and disorganized. Sir W. Balfour, who commanded the left wing of the Parliamentary army, noticing the fatal mistake, gave the order to charge both the centre and the remaining cavalry of the Royalists; and as the word charge was repeated along the line, Cromwell\*—then, as we have said, only a Captain of a troop in the famous regiment which afterwards acquired the name of “Ironsides”—raising his stalwart form in the stirrups, and pointing at the enemy with his extended arm, spoke a few words in that deep, metallic voice, which, though not loud, was heard by his men, clear as a bell through all the din.

“Charge! my men, in the name of God! Rein in, till we are upon them; then cut and slay, and spare not.”

\* It is disputed whether Cromwell was at Edgehill at all. I have taken him there on the authority of Carlyle, who says, “in which battle Captain Cromwell *was* present and did his duty, let angry Denzil say what he will,” he quotes Vicars, p. 98. That Cromwell was there only as a Captain is probable, as his name appears as of that rank in an “Army List” of the 14th Sept., preceding, in troop 67. See CARLYLE’S “Letters,” vol. i., p. 155.



A stern "hum" was the response of the troop, and slowly that body of horse moved on, gradually increasing its speed; but with not a rank broken, not a man out of his place; till at last, at a sharp trot, their solid mass burst upon the enemy with the shock of a thunderbolt.

It was now the turn of the Royalists to give way. Prince Rupert, having seen his mistake, galloped back to support his friends; but the moment, the precious moment in war, as in other things, had passed. The men, hot, fatigued, agitated with excitement, could not withstand the steady, anvil-like blows of the Puritans; and, after a conflict in which deeds of personal prowess were done on both sides worthy the days of chivalry, the Royalists were driven from their position and compelled to retreat to the top of the hill.

The battle of Edgehill, as is well known, was a drawn battle: the armies on both sides claimed the victory; and the King's

army, in one sense, suffered most, inasmuch as they lost their brave General, Lord Lindsay. But in sober truth it was a drawn battle. On both sides some did well and some did ill; and, as the chroniclers of the day say, some deserved to be hanged. Each gained some advantage; both, after tasting the blows of their opponents, had had enough of it for a time; and both armies, as it is well known, after remaining on the ground during the night, and glaring at each other the next day, withdrew without any further conflict.

Thus, if we may be permitted a comparison after the manner of the elder poets, may two valiant bull-dogs be seen, at a signal, to rush towards each other,—fire in their glaring eyeballs and foam on their white teeth; with a shock they close, and, rolling frantic in the dust, they rend each other with fierce jaw. Suddenly they pause breathless, and, retreating a few paces, stand glaring at each other; while deep growls, which would be

imprecations if they could speak, tell of the fire still raging in their warlike breasts. Then, slowly turning, each, with circumambient glare and tail erect, majestically stalks away and seeks that repose which will befit him for another fight.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## THE UNSOLDIERLY SOLDIER.

CAPTAIN WILLINGHAM'S first care on the termination of the battle, after attention to his military duties, was to see to the welfare and comfort of the prisoner, whose life he had so narrowly saved ; he found him seriously, but not dangerously wounded, and the surgeon's report satisfied him that a few weeks would restore him to health. " Now God be praised," was his mental ejaculation as he entered the tent, where he had directed his own cot to be given up to the wounded man ; and fer-

vently indeed did he thank God that he had been the means of preserving the life of his beloved Rachel's father.

"I greet ye, Colonel Frankland," he said, as he entered; adding, as he saw that the wounded man was suffering much, "fear not neglect: thou art, by God's blessing, in the hands of a friend."

"I feel it," said the patient. "I marked how thou didst spring forward in the field to save me from the blow of thy brother officer; and I judged by thine eye, even as I lay wounded, that thou hadst the spirit of a gentleman in thy blood: but that officer—is not his name Slasher?"

"Name him not," said Hubert with an impatient stamp, "Name him not: his conduct was a disgrace to the King's army. Judge us not by that man."

"I do not, my deliverer," replied Frankland: "but who art thou? I know thee not; yet thy face has lineaments that are known to me."

---

"I rejoice," said the young man, "that I do so bear the marks of my father's noble features in mine. I marvel not that my face seems to thee like that of a friend, for men say I am the image of the old Knight. I am Hubert Willingham, the son of thy old friend."

"Ah," said Frankland with a faint smile, for he was becoming languid with pain and loss of blood; "am I ever to receive benefits from thy kindred and never to return them? But I am satisfied," he added: "in the hands of a Willingham, I fear nothing but too much love."

Willingham longed to say what a priceless benefit Frankland might confer upon him; but he felt that this was not the time; and he contented himself with doing all that the tenderest nurse could do for his wounded prisoner, and left him to seek repose, he himself joining his brother officers at their evening meal.

Captain Slasher was there, and, as Willing-

ham entered the tent where their temporary mess, as we should now call it, was established, looked daggers at him; but Willingham's cool and steady look of contempt quelled the little spirit that rage and mortification had given the valiant killer of fallen men. The Captain withdrew his eyes from the look that he could not face, and betook himself to the contemplation of his rations.

"So," said Colonel Walborough, the commanding officer of their regiment, when the meal was despatched, and they were refreshing themselves with wine after the fatigues of the day, "I hear thou hast taken a prisoner, and one of rank."

"I have, Colonel," replied Willingham; "no less than the celebrated Colonel Frankland."

"Ah!" exclaimed the Colonel, looking at Slasher, "is not that the gentleman whom you said we saw at Remenham?"

"It is," replied the Captain, turning rather red and then very pale; "and if you had

let me arrest him then, we should have been saved some trouble: perhaps have won the day; for if he had not given us so much trouble, the enemy could not have had time to rally."

"Aye," rejoined Willingham, "and if you had dealt with him to-day as you wished, we should have had no future trouble with him."

"What," exclaimed the Colonel, "did you cut him down, Slasher? If so, he was the captive of *your* bow, and Willingham should not have interfered."

"If Captain Slasher disputes the lawfulness of my prize," said Willingham very quietly, "I will relate how the whole affair took place, and take your judgment on the matter. How say you, Captain Slasher? do you wish to dispute this affair?" he added, turning round and looking steadily in the Captain's face.

"No, no," replied the latter; "it was your luck to be up the first, and I dispute not your prize."



"It is well," said Willingham with a grave smile.

The Colonel saw there was something amiss ; but he was too good an officer to foster, or allow to be fostered, animosities in his regiment, and more especially when in the field. He said, therefore, with a slight touch of the tone of command, "Gentlemen, if you are agreed, let no more be said about it ; we are servants of the King, and may not have private broils here : nor, remember, *elsewhere.*"

The officers bowed and made no reply, and the conversation became general. In the generous mind of Willingham no traces of what had passed remained, except an increased disposition to have as little to do as possible with an officer who could be guilty of such an attempt as that of killing an enemy when he was down and might be taken. But in the heart of Slasher, mortification sunk deep ; and, as with base natures, he who has seen their baseness,

becomes always an object of fear and hatred, so Willingham was, in the mind of Slasher, placed forthwith in the same list as Colonel Frankland—he feared him, and he hated him.

Frankland's reflections in the meanwhile, as he lay restless and wakeful with pain, were of a very mixed kind. He had long had reason to suspect the state of affairs in the heart of his daughter and young Willingham; and though the unhappy political differences of the times rendered the contemplation of their union a thing scarcely to be entertained, either by himself or by his old friend, it was a union to which, if these differences should come to a conclusion, he would have looked, so far as the family connection was concerned, with unmixed satisfaction. But he had never seen Willingham, and though hearing well of him wherever he had heard him spoken of at all, he was glad to have been able to judge in his own person that he was the high-minded, noble young fellow that he had shown himself: so far

his mishap was a source of satisfaction. On the other hand, here he was scarcely landed in England, and a prisoner—and that in the very critical time when his services might be the most useful to his party. How long he might be compelled to sheathe the sword, it was impossible to conjecture; for, of course, he could only expect to be put on his parole till an exchange could be effected; and that might be weeks, months, or years. It was tantalizing; but like a true soldier, he comforted himself with the reflection that it was *fortune de la guerre*; and as soon as the cessation of bodily pain permitted him to sleep, he did not suffer pain of mind to prevent it.

But now to return for a few moments to the officer whom we have called by two different names, and who had already shown so much hostility to the Colonel.

Captain Slasher was one of that class out of which the poor King was compelled by his necessities partly to officer his army. His

real name was Slasher Gehazy, and he was a gentleman by birth; the son of an old but somewhat impoverished family: left to his own guidance at an early period of life by the death of his father, with but a slender patrimony, he had gone abroad and served in foreign armies, as was then much the custom, in order to learn the art of war.

Poor, luxurious, and ill-educated, but handsome, and bold in society, he had while abroad, in order to supply his extravagance, adopted a course then not uncommon in some foreign societies, and not altogether forgotten even in these virtuous days, of eking out the income arising from scanty pay, by gambling, and by some other not very reputable modes of getting money; and whatever he thus got, he squandered in every kind of debauchery, so that when he returned to England and took service in the English army, he was an accomplished *roué*: but he was not an accomplished soldier, for he lacked the most important ingredient for soldiers, personal


courage. Not that he was actually a coward ; he had just courage enough to get through his duty in general without positive disgrace ; but he loved not, nay he considerably hated, danger ; and he took very considerable pains to keep out of it so far as he could without compromising himself. But an un-brave soldier can no more pursue a continued career of soldiership without betraying his deficiency, than a schoolmaster, innocent of classics, could continue a career of pedagogueism without betraying his ignorance ; though he might do so for a while.

Hence Captain Gehazy had, on several occasions, happened to be absent from the critical post of danger, through a combination of reasons and circumstances so intricate as to be quite unintelligible to brave men ; and had, consequently, been more than once the subject of suspicion as to the colour of his liver. Serving in the expedition to La Rochelle with Colonel Frankland, he had, in the retreat from the Isle

de Rhée, exhibited under the very eye of Frankland such unmistakeable haste in seeking the boats, while men and ammunition remained yet to be disembarked under fire, that the Colonel had been compelled to administer to him a severe professional rebuke; and Captain Gehazy only escaped a court-martial, because the Duke and the army were ashamed of the whole affair of the expedition; consequently the Captain's backsliding was hushed up by common consent: just as in modern times, one sometimes sees affairs in which individuals have played a very sorry part, cushioned and hushed up by Parliamentary Committees; not for the purpose of screening those particular individuals, whose sacrifice no one would care two straws about; but because much more might come out than would be convenient to many other persons of more importance.

Captain Gehazy, on returning from the Rochelle expedition, had retired into the country, and, dropping the Gehazy, called

himself simply Slasher; in consequence, as he took care to report at head-quarters, of inheriting some little property from the Slasher branch of the family: though where the site of this property was, no one had the smallest conception. After a few years had passed, and the civil war broke out, he presented himself for service; and, having friends at Court, and the King being too ill-provided with officers to be able to be very particular about the antecedents of all who offered their swords, particularly in the subaltern ranks, he obtained a captaincy. Thus he found himself in the regiment of Colonel Walborough, whose keen military eye soon detected that in his new Captain there was more of the swash buckler than of the knight—more of the swaggering *roué* than of the gentleman; and what he had seen of him at the meeting at Remenham, made him guess that there had been some dirty work on his part, in the passages between him and Hubert Willingham.



The result was not an increase of cordiality in the manner of his Colonel towards Captain Slasher, and the latter gentleman laying that charge also to the door of Frankland and Willingham, (for it never entered his head to lay it to his own door) added an item to the account of Frankland in his book of hatred, and entered a new account in the name of Willingham.



## CHAPTER IX.

## PRINCELY CONDESCENSION.

RACHEL's position at Willingham Hall was all that could be desired in point of personal safety and the feeling of personal comfort. She was under the roof of her early protector, whom she loved with a love only second to that which she gave to her father; she was surrounded by all those little luxuries and articles of feminine refinement which the age knew, and which Sir John had taken care (not without sundry little aids and hints from Hubert) to introduce into her apartments and

---

into their dwelling rooms. She felt as safe and protected as it was possible in such troublous times to feel. Yet she was restless, almost unhappy. She was anxious for her father; she was even more anxious for Hubert, whose fiery courage she knew was not so tempered with caution as her father's. Rumours of skirmishes and coming battles found their way to the Hall, distorted and aggravated in a thousand ways; and her poor heart was kept in a perpetual flutter of dread and uncertainty.

It was the third day after the battle of Edgehill, and the old Knight and Rachel were sitting together after the midday meal (for our readers need hardly be informed that in those days country gentlemen dined never later than one). Rachel had before her an open volume of Tasso (she read the poets, though she was a *quasi* Roundhead), and a piece of embroidery in her hand; but the same page took her a very long time, though she was a good Italian scholar, and the

embroidery hung fire at the tenth stitch in a very dogged manner.

Sir John was taking his siesta, with his feet almost upon the fire-dogs, to the great danger of ignition of his shoes and hose, when a furious galloping was heard in the road, and a trooper dressed in the royal uniform dashed into the courtyard, and, dismounting, knocked loudly at the massive doors of the house. Rachel started up, and, proceeding to the top of the great staircase, met one of the serving men, who informed her that a trooper of Captain Willingham's regiment desired speech of Sir John. She ordered the man to be sent up, and returned with a beating heart to apprise the Knight; who, not much less agitated, but endeavouring to appear calm, shook off all relics of drowsiness, and sat up in his chair to receive the messenger. The trooper came in and, raising his hand to his head as he crossed the threshold, advanced and delivered to Sir John a packet tied with silk and triple

sealed, and then stood upright as if on guard.

"Thank God!" ejaculated the old man, "it is in Hubert's hand-writing."

Rachel closed her eyes, and she, too, returned thanks; but her joy was not so unmixed: Hubert was safe, but her father!

"Here," said the old man, handing her the packet while he shaded his eyes, complaining that his eyesight was going; "take it, Rachel, and read it for me: Hubert can have nothing to say that concerneth not thee as well as me. And thou, good fellow," he added, turning to the trooper, "get thee down to the buttery, and the butler will give thee a pasty for thy hunger and a flask of the best of my claret (and thou likest not ale better) to quench thy thirst and drink the King's health; for thy ride must have set thy appetite somewhat sharp."

The trooper saluted again and, facing round, marched out, preceded by the butler; who, having heard there was a packet from the

camp, had made bold to come up that he might hear of his young master.

Meanwhile, Rachel, undoing with trembling hands the letter, proceeded to read it. It told Sir John of the fight of Edgehill; how the King was safe, and how the victory was doubtful; it told him that his regiment had been particularly praised by His Majesty, and it told of the wound and capture of Colonel Frankland; speaking (in those warm terms in which a brave soldier knows how to speak of a brave enemy) of the desperate resistance made by Frankland. It told minutely—and this Rachel felt in her inmost heart was meant for her—of the safety of her father, and of Hubert's own delight in having secured for him the protection of his old friend's son in his captivity; and it closed with messages to Rachel, in which the young girl felt that the spirit of a devoted love for her breathed.

When she had concluded, she threw herself on her knees before the old man, and, taking

his hands in hers, laid her fair head upon them and wept. They were tears of agitation and tears of joy, and the old man could scarce refrain from mingling his own with them. But that became not his manhood nor his knighthood; so, releasing one of his hands and brushing it across his eyes, he patted her fondly on the head, saying,

“How now, wench, dost thou weep that Hubert is safe and has done his *devoir*?”

“Nay, my dear guardian,” she said, “none rejoices in that more than I. But my own dear father is a prisoner and wounded: would that I could go and tend him.”

“Thou mayest tend him *here* if thou wilt, Rachel, but not in the camp; that may not be.”

“Here, sir, here! how can that be?”

“We will manage that,” said the Knight; “I will write to the Prince; I was an old comrade of his father, and he will not refuse to me that that comrade’s oldest friend should be cared for; they know thy father, my

child, and they know that his parole will be sacred."

"Truly," replied Rachel; "they who know my father must indeed know that. But if this is thy kind purpose, were it not better to despatch thy letter by this same trooper?"

The young lady made this suggestion because she well knew that her old friend was getting somewhat of the dilatoriness of old age, so that if she did not do what our moderns call "strike while the iron is hot," his zeal for his friend, real though it was, might take so long to shape itself in action, that her father might get well of his wound and be sent to London as a prisoner, before the letter to the Prince would be despatched. So she suggested as the most convenient messenger the present trooper.

"Thou'rt right, Rachel," replied the Knight; "fetch me my writing materials and thou shalt write what I dictate." And she sat down and wrote to the Knight's

dictation two letters, one for Prince Rupert, and one for the Colonel, pressing the transmission of Colonel Frankland, as soon as he could be moved, to Willingham Hall on parole, and engaging to send for him a litter and horses, to depart on the day following the departure of the messenger.

Now this plan happened to suit Prince Rupert quite as well as it suited Sir John Willingham and Hubert and Rachel; for it gave him the opportunity of obliging a Roundhead gentleman, it relieved him from the encumbrance of carrying a prisoner with the army, and it afforded the prospect of a longer detention from the Roundhead army than might have otherwise happened, of an officer of whose merits he was perfectly aware, and of whose assistance he was very glad to deprive the Parliament. Therefore, as it suited his policy and convenience in every respect, he graciously intimated to Captain Willingham, after the manner of Princes and Ministers, that he was very happy to show



his appreciation of his services and of the loyalty of his father, by yielding to Sir John's request, much though it departed from military custom ; and both Willingham and his father were too green—the one from youth, and the other from age and loyalty—not to be delighted with what appeared to them the condescension and kindness of the Prince.

## CHAPTER X.

## THE FAIR PURITAN.

THE Parliamentary army had sat down before Reading, then held by the King, and were laying close siege to it; and Hubert Willingham with his troop was serving in the place. Long—though, as my readers know, successful in the end—were the endeavours of the Parliament to take the town, and sorties innumerable were made by the besieged. In one of these Willingham was struck from his horse by a musket shot, taken prisoner, and carried off wounded.

His captor was no other than our friend Corporal Elijah Gideon; who, having been transferred from Captain Cromwell's troop to a troop in another regiment, principally on account of his being an excellent drill-master, was among the besiegers. Gideon, though he had been, as may be inferred from his original trade, somewhat of a rake-helly; and though he had since that thrown off the garb of iniquity and donned the armour of righteousness, had not therefore become a sour fanatic. He was no further a hypocrite than all were hypocrites who, from the fashion of their sect, had adopted that strange language, in which the Puritans so continually dragged the Lord through the mire of their most common every day concerns; and scarcely ate a ration of beef, or took a pull at a jack of ale, except in God's name.

Though something of a republican, Gideon had not lost all reverence for birth and gentle blood; and, though fighting with good will when fighting was to be done;

and though quite as ready as any of Cromwell's troopers to fire a shot in the *mêlée* as well at the King as at any common soldier, he was neither cruel nor blood-thirsty. In fact, he was, as he had been before, a really jolly good hearted fellow; who, having taken service on one side, would do his duty to that side, and adopted the slang of his party as a matter of course; but once out of harness would do the duty of a good fellow, to those who came in contact with him. He did not, therefore, treat his Cavalier prisoner roughly, either because he was a Cavalier, or because he was a gentleman; but on the contrary, he was disposed to treat him kindly, because he was a captive soldier and a fellow-countryman; and rather the more so disposed because he found he was a gentleman of good family. He conveyed him carefully to his own quarters in the village where his troop was quartered, at the shop of a small grocer rejoicing in the name of Manasses Broadbelt.

A bitter and a sour Puritan was Manasses ; of the very bitterest and sourest ; he was of that class of them who hated the Established Church as something almost worse than Popery ; who hated royalty as something intolerable even in its very sound to the ear of a free man ; who hated everything and every body that was above them, and every body and everything that in the least degree thwarted them.

In fact, there were but three things for which the closest observer could trace any love in Manasses. The first was himself ; the second was the fruit of his dealings in trade ; the third was his daughter. The first was, as we have placed it in the order of his loves, the most intense : probably its intensity was increased beyond the average intensity of men's love for themselves, upon the principle often found in the love of man for woman, or of woman for man ; viz., that when one of either sex does place his or her love on an ugly specimen of

the other sex, the love is intense to a degree verging on insanity. So, probably, with Manasses: the excessive ugliness of his moral self only increased his love for that self, to a degree approaching fanatical worship; the two other loves were closely balanced. He did love his pence (who does not?); but he loved his daughter almost if not quite as much; and the severest moral struggles of the worthy grocer's soul, were always when his love for his daughter and his love for gain came into collision.

His daughter Margery was of a very different temperament, and of very different opinions, though she was compelled to be a little hypocritical and not always to let her father see how much difference there was in their opinions. Her mother had been the foster sister of a lady of good family; and, brought up in that family, had imbibed royalist and episcopal sentiments: wooed by Manasses (who served the family in the way of his trade), partly for her good looks and

partly for the dowry which her lady had promised her on her marriage—and Manasses concealing, to a great extent, his own opinions and sourness while wooing—she had married him; and after some years of wedlock, during which the pretty Margery was born, Manasses had broken his wife's gentle heart by his meanness of spirit, his sourness of temper, and his unceasing tyranny over her in the matter of religion. But the mother did not die before her daughter had reached the age of twelve years, and she had—not out of opposition to her husband, for she was too gentle and submissive for that, but really because she could not help it—imbued her child with her own gentle feelings; something of her own love and reverence for royalty and good blood, and somewhat also of her own attachment to the Church.

Margery had inherited from her father a touch of his hardness, without the bitterness. She was, therefore, though a good and obedient daughter to him, not quite so submis-

sive and chicken-hearted as her mother ; and though she did not openly and directly thwart her father in his politics or religion, or rather in his sour anti-religion ; and though she never meddled with him in the slightest degree in his dealings, she contrived, by a mixture of winning ways and quiet obstinacy, to have her own way a good deal. And if she did not altogether eschew the ministry of the Rev. Ebenezer Brimstone, whose doctrine and teaching her father affected, she insisted on and exercised the right of frequently attending the parish Church, and of there worshipping according to the usage of her mother, and her mother's parents before her.

For the rest, as to her personal appearance, Margery was of the cast of beauty common among our English women of the people. She was fair, with a blooming colour ; hazel eyes full of tenderness and fun mixed ; and a profusion of chesnut hair, which she braided very neatly, so as to let a portion of it escape



from beneath the covering of the prim cap, which her father insisted on her wearing as became a pious maiden of the Lord's people.

In the house of this little family, Elijah was quartered, and was gradually becoming a considerable favourite. He was still but a young man—that is, not above two and thirty, and Margery was nineteen; and it was not astonishing that Elijah should have felt a yearning towards the damsel. Under the influence of this feeling he certainly did a little play the hypocrite; but he justified himself by a text, “Be ye all things unto all men.” That was conclusive, and he acted upon it.

To Manasses, as they would sit after the military work of the day was over, smoking their pipes and refreshing their dry throats with discreet draughts of old ale, Elijah talked in the very best approved style of their sect. He scripturally cursed the King and the Bishops, to the heart's content of Manasses; and, as he was a careful man,

and out of his pay punctually paid Manasses for his lodging and everything that he had beyond his apportioned rations, Manasses came to consider him a good and a prudent youth: one who would help to pull down "the man," as they already began to call the King; and also to cut up all the ungodly, root and branch.

With Margery, on the other hand, when—as sometimes happened, indeed oftener than perhaps was strictly military—Elijah returned to his quarters while Manasses was plodding in the shop, and found his way into the little sitting room where he knew Margery was to be found;—with Margery, I say, Elijah was—quite unintentionally, of course—a very different man: his voice, which was not naturally harsh, became really very soft and gentle; and his talk about the war would be much interlarded with pitiful expressions of sympathy for the fate of the poor King, and of the noble gentlemen who fought with him, and regrets that it

should be the will of God that he should fight so often against the feelings of his heart. And though he did not go so far as to say anything against his own sect, he spoke generally of the Church almost reverentially, as a child would of a parent with whom he has had an unhappy quarrel. So that Margery, touched by the gentle voice and the gentle language, began to think in her innocent little heart that she might, perhaps, convert the stout soldier, and make almost a churchman and a royalist of him "some day."

But how, then, will the reader say to himself, did Elijah conduct himself when with both father and daughter together? Thus did Elijah: when he was with the father and daughter together, he talked of the siege, and of guns, and embrasures, and the calibre of musquetoons, with a vast amount of professional zeal, and never had time to speak of either religion or politics.

Things were at this juncture, when he

brought home one day to his quarters his wounded prisoner, Hubert Willingham.

"How now," said his host, Manasses, as he saw the soldiers carrying the wounded man into the house, "how now, friend Elijah, wherefore dost thou bring hither this malignant whom thy sword has spared? If *thou* doest thy work so negligently, and lettest the enemies of the people escape, thinkest thou that I, who can scarcely feed the mouths of myself and my own daughter, can bear the charge of thy prisoner?"


"Master Broadbelt," replied Elijah, "fear nothing. The man is a malignant, but he is a rich one; he will pay thy charges and mine twofold, and a goodly ransom besides."

"Ah! that maketh, indeed, a difference," said the good man; "it were sinful to let even a malignant die, when we can help him. But where wilt thou lodge him? for thou knowest there is but one room, besides mine and thine, and that is my daughter's and the serving wench's."

“We will put him, if it please you,” said Elijah, “in mine, and I will sleep in the kitchen: thou wilt not grudge me a few chairs, and my riding cloak will serve for a pillow.”

Manasses was silent for a moment: he was calculating that he could *charge* the prisoner for the use of the room, which he was obliged by his duty to the Parliament to give to Elijah for *nothing*, and so he would be a gainer by his Christian charity; and he therefore acquiesced in the arrangement, piously shuddering, however, as the long Cavalier locks of the now nearly insensible man, falling down his neck and shoulders, caught his eye.

“The carnal self-seeker,” he exclaimed; “I wonder not that the hand of the Lord is upon them, when they thus deck themselves out like wantons with love-locks. Surely, friend corporal, thou wouldst do well to cut off these abominations; the youth’s head would be the cooler: and moreover,”



added he, lowering his voice, "I doubt not our neighbour Tomkins, the barber, would give a good price for the hair; it is long and comely, yea, as a maiden's."

"Tush, Master Manasses," responded Elijah, a little disgusted and thrown off his guard, "his locks will not kill the young man, either body or soul: I have seen as good men as thee or me with locks as long as that, and longer."

Manasses turned upon him one of his sourest looks.

"Ha!" he cried, "thou a soldier of the Parliament, and speakest thus of the vanities of the men of Belial!"

"God forgive me!" answered Elijah, recollecting himself, with a pious look and an extra nasal tone. "Alack! how long it taketh to root out the ancient Adam. I was a sinner in my youth—yea, a great sinner; and still at times my soul cleaveth to vanity. But the Lord," he said, nearly turning his eyes inside out, "hath rebuked me out of


thy mouth. I am humbled—yea, abased ! hum !”

Manasses was pacified, for the time at least, and became quite so when Elijah skilfully turned the conversation on the guerdon he was likely to obtain from the wealthy malignant, for his care.

The reception of the wounded man by Margery was somewhat different. In those days things were not as now. You could not then run down any decent street in any decent town, and see in it at least three windows with bright red and blue bottles, indicating the premises of a gentleman skilled in blue pill and amputation ; on the contrary, you might have run half over Reading, and not got hold of the one or two surgeons at most who boasted professional character and skill. In a village it was of course worse ; in those days, therefore, medicine and surgery were, as in the days of Homeric Princesses, extensively in the hands of the women, from the paucity of skilled doctors ; and in the

exigencies of the civil war, there was nothing unmaidenly or unusual in the daughters of the house attending in the sick rooms of the wounded soldiers, and with their own hands dressing their wounds, and ministering to their comforts.

Hence, so soon as Margery heard there was a wounded officer brought home, she forthwith went to the chamber where he was laid, and, not waiting for a surgeon who might not be accessible for hours, she inquired what were the patient's hurts, and betook herself to examine them, and to do what her skill and knowledge enabled her to effect for their alleviation. If it had required the amputation of a limb, Margery was not leech enough for that; but she was skilled enough to be able to ascertain that the ball had passed through the fleshy part of the chest, near the shoulder joint, and that the real injury resulted from loss of blood and from Hubert's having dislocated his other shoulder in his fall from his horse.





Directing, therefore, Elijah how to pull at the arm, which she was not strong enough to do, she contrived with his aid, to jerk the dislocated shoulder-joint back into its socket; then applying styptics, according to the learning of the times, to the wound, and binding it up after a thorough washing, she desired the nearly fainting patient to be left; and, quietly ejecting Elijah and her father, she announced the necessity of perfect repose, and the intention of herself and the serving maid to take it by turns to watch by the patient's bedside for the next twelve hours.

As her looks full of pity fell on the pale and handsome countenance of the Cavalier, an indistinct sort of feeling that he had in some measure been a dolt, passed through the brain of Elijah; but he withdrew, according to orders, and for the time thought no more about it.

Day after day passed, however, and the siege continued, and Hubert's wounds began to grow well. But loss of blood had ren-

dered him so weak, that he could not be moved from his couch: so day after day Margery was still his nurse; and as he grew better, she would sit for hours in the little room, drinking in the sound of his sweet voice, as he gently thanked her for all her kind nursing, and told her of the adventures of the war, and of the feats and sufferings of the Cavaliers. Then she would ask questions about Willingham Hall, and would listen breathless to his description of the knightly hall and its noble park, and the huntings and feastings of his younger days. Then would he also talk to her of books, and read to her scenes from the plays of "old Will. Shakspeare," or tell her some of the gorgeous legends of chivalry in the *Orlando* and the *Gerusalemme Liberata*. And all this he did in pure and simple gratitude, for he saw that his pretty and gentle nurse took delight in it; and he little dreamed of the mischief he was working.

To her, alas! it was opening a new world

—a world of dreams and poetry, rendering distasteful to her the mean and sordid realities of her father's house; and even the honest, but too rough, affection of the bluff Elijah. To say that she loved Hubert would not be the right word; the thought did not enter her head: the difference of rank, of party, of religion, shut out the mere notion that he could love her; but her heart, become the slave of her fancy and imagination, had made him, as it were, an idol of distant worship. She lived, when she saw his face and heard his voice, in an exquisite dream. Away from him, life seemed dull and stagnant; an unprofitable trouble. Alas! poor Margery.

Alas! too, poor Elijah: thou didst, indeed, a foolish thing, speaking according to worldly wisdom, when thou broughtest to thy home the bright and seductive Cavalier; yet thou didst the duty of a Christian man, and it may be that it will be repaid to thee, even in this world.

## CHAPTER XI.

## THE ESCAPE.

WHEN Gideon perceived that the pretty Margery took no longer the same pleasure in his company and talk that she did before, he was deeply grieved. In the language of the day—and as he would have expressed it, if it had been a matter of which to speak to any one—“he was a stricken deer; yea, he was cast down in spirit, and the deep waters were round about him.”

He was not long in suspecting the cause of it, and he became, not unnaturally, less

kindly in feeling towards his prisoner. As the young officer had intimated to Gideon that he should receive a handsome gratuity by way of ransom, he had not put him on parole; but now that Hubert began to recover his strength, Gideon, careless of the gratuity—for though a Puritan, he was not greedy—not only intimated to him that he was not to be at liberty to leave the house without permission, but took the measures which he was entitled to take: not permitting him to move out without a couple of soldiers as a guard; and placing also a guard over the house.

Hubert as naturally felt himself absolved by this conduct from anything like being upon honour, and, anxious to rejoin his own people, began to cast about how to contrive his escape. After a while, he determined to confide in his pretty nurse; in whom he saw plainly a leaning towards the Royalist cause, and in whom he saw as plainly a kind feeling towards himself: how kind it

was, the entire absorption of his own feelings in the recollection of Rachel, prevented him from at all seeing.

Margery at first evinced great distaste to take any part in an act which she could not but look upon as treason to her father and his friends; but she could not resist the pleadings of Hubert. And when in the solitude of her chamber she examined her own heart, she at length saw with horror the gulf into which she had all but plunged: the very dread of losing Hubert, which she felt was a strong motive to her not to facilitate his escape, opened her eyes to what she then, in the depth of her agony, taxed herself with as unmaidenly and sinful. She saw that it was better for her own peace—if, indeed, that was not gone for ever—that she should withdraw from the edge of the precipice, while it was yet time. She consented, therefore, at last, to contrive and aid his escape; and a few days gave her the opportunity.

A vigorous attack was made on the town by the besiegers, and they were nearly carrying it: every disposable man, therefore, in the camp was called into active service. Thus the guard being withdrawn from their house, Margery, while her father was buried in the depths of his shop and ledgers, apprized the young Cavalier, who had taken care for days to be always ready for a start at a moment's notice; and disguising him, by furnishing him with an old cloak of her father's, which nearly enveloped him, and a cap which, drawn over his forehead, quite covered his eyes, they both went forth together; that she might guide him, by paths that he knew not, to a spot on the side opposite to where the attack was taking place, and where she knew of a secret entrance into the town.

Poor child! how her heart beat as she silently preceded the young officer, walking through the village and then across solitary fields. Repeatedly he essayed to speak to her,

seeing that she was agitated ; but not a word could she answer : she felt choking. Yet on she went till they reached the city gate ; and then, touching the spring, the gate was flung open, and they entered together within it, and found themselves at the foot of the outer rampart.

“Here,” said Margery, “we must part.”

She was pale as death, and her words were scarcely articulate.

“My sweet nurse,” said Hubert, “never can I sufficiently thank thee for thy care ; but think not I ever meant to defraud either thy father or Elijah of that which is theirs by my promise. Elijah hath been harsh to me of late : why I know not ; and I had a right to escape if I could. But my ransom is his ; and thy father hath been at heavy charges for me. Give, I pray thee, this packet to Elijah, and this to thy father : and for thy sweet self, pardon me if I pray thee to accept this other packet as a dowry, when thou shalt choose a husband : and now, fare-



well!" and he took her hand, and raised it respectfully to his lips.

Margery had taken the packets for her father and Elijah without a word; but when he placed the third in her hands, she thrust it back with a passionate gesture.

"No, no!" she exclaimed vehemently, "not gold from thee—not from thee!" and then, exhausted with fatigue and agitation, she would have sunk to the ground, had not Hubert sprung forward and caught her in his arms.

"Ho! ho! my most sober Roundhead," shouted a coarse voice on the edge of the ramparts, "whom have we here? An old Roundhead making love to a pretty young one. Ha! ha! be they not saints? And a brave wench, Pardieu! Have the old sinner down! have at them, my lads!" exclaimed the voice of Captain Slasher, as, dismounting, he descended the slope, sword in hand, followed by a dozen soldiers. "Faith, Ralph," said he, turning to one of them, "thou mayest

have the old sinner; I will take the young one. Away with them to quarters;" and he strode forward to seize Margery.

But Hubert, throwing off the cap that concealed his features, and the old cloak that concealed his military coat, drew himself up before the astonished Slasher, and, at once recognized by his men, re-assumed his command.

"Captain Slasher," he said, "I know not what you do here away from the point of attack; your place is on the other side of the town: return to your duty—take all the men with you but three; leave me three men, and report me returned."

"But, sir," was beginning the Captain.

"But me no buts, sir," was the reply; "you are in my troop, obey my orders, or I shall place you under arrest instantly. Ralph," he said, seeing that Margery was by this time in a dead faint, "dismount, and lift this young damsel on your horse; and treat her," he said, seeing an approach

to a smile on the man's face, "as if she were your Captain's sister."

The man dismounted, and with military rapidity and precision, executed the orders given to him; and Hubert, springing on the horse of the dismounted trooper, and supporting the lifeless form of the fainting girl as tenderly as if she had been his own Rachel, gave the order to march, and took his way to his own quarters. On arriving there, he committed Margery to the charge of the elder of the men who followed him, and whom he knew he could trust, with orders to procure the speediest assistance for her; he then galloped off with the other men to the spot where he ascertained his own regiment was posted, in time to take his part in a sortie, by which the assailants were repulsed with so much slaughter as to be obliged to give up for that time the attack.

In the mean time poor Margery was suffering agonies. When she revived from her

faint, and collected her scattered senses, and found where she was—in the tent of Captain Willingham and in the very heart of the camp of those wild and hair-brained Cavaliers—when she recollected what she had done, and the scene which had been witnessed by that terrible officer and his rude soldiers, she gasped for breath: she felt as if her heart would break, and she covered her burning face with her hands.

What would Hubert think of her? what would her father think of her? Alas! what would the good Elijah, whose image now stood before the eye of her memory, with a look of reproach, what would he think of her? Would not her name pass from mouth to mouth as that of a light maiden, who had thrown off all maidenly modesty, and been the companion of the flight of a young Cavalier officer? The thought was horrible, and she wept bitterly; till at length excitement produced fatigue, and fatigue a little more calm.

She was sitting thus alone in the tent, dreading what was next to come, and trying to think what she ought to do—what she could do—when Hubert and Colonel Walborough entered the tent.

Willingham's first care, after the troops had returned to quarters, had been to wait on his Colonel, and—informing him of the mode of his escape, and the way in which he had been forced to bring Margery into the town; as he could not leave her, in the state in which she was, to find her way back—to request a safe conduct for her. The Colonel listened very gravely, and when Hubert had done, placed his hand on his shoulder, saying,

“Willingham, I trust thou hast not trifled with this poor girl: I trust thou hast not wronged her, even in thought.”

“On my honour, no,” replied Hubert; “to have done so were, indeed, base: not a feeling have I for her beyond gratitude and respect; and it is because I so feel, that I

desire to send her to her father before she has been an hour in our camp."

"Thou art right," said the Colonel: "I was wrong to have misdoubted thee; but thou well knowest so many of our young men, alas! bring discredit on the name of a King's soldier, that I feared me thou mightst have been like the rest, and repaid her for service with cruelty. I will go with thee to thy quarters, and the poor girl shall not see thee, except in such a way as may defy even Slasher to say aught against her honour."

Thus the Colonel and Hubert presented themselves before her; and the former going up to her, took her hands kindly, saying,

"Fear nothing, young maiden. Thou hast, I hear, rendered kind service to one of my best officers: thou hast the thanks of Colonel Walborough, and thou shalt have, forthwith, safe passage to thy father's house; and I, myself, will write him how thou wast compelled by necessity to come hither."

Poor Margery could do nothing but utter her thanks in broken language, scarcely intelligible for sobbing; but the gentle voice of Hubert, and the courteous and respectful demeanour and language of the Colonel, gradually restored her. In an hour's time, under an escort of twenty men, commanded by a trusty serjeant, she was on her way back to the house of her father; to whom she was delivered in safety, with the Colonel's letter, and the two packets for him and Elijah, which Hubert insisted on her taking: the third, which had caused the scene that had so much distressed her, he, with the delicacy of a gentleman, had forborne to offer again.

Whether Hubert had at last gathered an inkling of the true cause of her agitation, he never told to mortal man; no, nor to woman either,—not even to his own Rachel: though in after times they often talked together of his escape to Reading, and of the gentle maiden who had helped him.

## CHAPTER XII.

## THE RETURN OF MARGERY.

THE captivity and escape of Hubert, though things perfectly natural in a campaign—indeed almost of course (for there perhaps never was a campaign in which soldiers have not been taken captives and escaped through the agency of sympathising woman), had, though very common-place affairs, deep and wide-spreading effects on the destinies of several of the persons whose history is involved in this story.

Captain Slasher, furious at being a second



time detected just where he should not have been—that is, out of the way of shot when he should have been in the very thick of it—and furious at being so unceremoniously reprimanded by a man whom he had hoped was booked for a long captivity and out of his way, lost no time in spreading the story of the Captain's carrying off the daughter of an old Roundhead in his escape. He told it also with embellishments, which, among the rattle-brained and dissolute young men who formed so considerable a portion of their regimental mess, afforded food for abundant raillery against Hubert; in which poor Margery's reputation was recklessly sacrificed on the altar of wit: if wit that can be called, which consists in catching at any ground for a coarse or dissolute joke.

If the matter had ended there, it would not have been of so much consequence; for Hubert very soon let it be known that any allusion to the name of Margery Broadbelt, inconsistent with the fair fame of a

young maiden, would be treated by him as a personal insult; and, as the bravos and swashbucklers of the regiment knew that he was by far the best broadsword in it, they became very taciturn on the subject. So far, therefore, as Margery was concerned, she was forgotten and not injured; but the story had been long enough afloat to travel, and it travelled to Willingham Hall, there to poison the peace of mind of Rachel.

Colonel Frankland had entirely recovered from his wound, and had effected an exchange; in consequence of which he was preparing to quit the hospitable roof of his friend, Sir John Willingham, to return to the army. He had but few days left to enjoy with his friend and his daughter, and they were all three sitting in the dining hall after supper, talking of the past events of the war, and the probabilities of the future. It was a subject that had been, till then, by common consent tabooed, as dangerous to the harmony of their society; but now, on the

eve of departure, the subject that was nearest to all their hearts, came also uppermost in their conversation.

“’Tis a sad state for our country,” said the Knight, who was the first to open upon it; “’tis a sad state, indeed, when old friends like you and I have the sword drawn against each other: and, alas! when and where will it end?”

“Ay, truly,” responded his guest, “when and where will it end? On our side, thou knowest, there are already fearful diversities of opinion and intention. I, as thou mayest well think, seek not to pull the king down, and drive him from his throne. I believe, else I should not have drawn the sword, that this land must be governed otherwise than it has been. Thou seest—every man must see—that the country is not what it was. The gentry have, many of them, wasted their estates, and the traders have gotten them, and will no longer be content to be nothing in the government of the land. The

---

merchants are a numerous and a powerful body. The yeomen, who were little better than serfs when this Government was founded and formed, are now substantial owners of freehold lands ; and the Reformation has taught this nation to hate not only Popery, but Episcopacy.

The King, alas ! thinks he may still govern, as his fathers did, by the high hand of his prerogative. But he hath not the means of enforcing his government : the army of feudatories that supported the pretensions of the Tudor race is gone. The King hath no army but what he can keep together by pay, and he hath not the power to raise money, except by the Commons ; who will not give it to him. That he must fail in this, his enterprise, I cannot doubt : would that he could see it, and make terms with the Commons ; for much I fear that there be spirits among our party who look further than to constrain the King within just bounds, and will not be content, if this war lasteth,

without making themselves great upon the ruins of the throne."

"It is even as thou sayest, Francis Frankland; and there is one amongst you, yet of small note, but who, I fear me, is of a soaring ambition."

"Mean you Captain Cromwell?"

"I do; Captain now, Colonel soon: Heaven knows what soon after that!"

"He is a pious man, and a good soldier," said Frankland; "he hath his troop the best ordered of any of our horse; and, methinks, he doth love his country. You and we think not the same of what is loving our country, and God only knows which is right; but Captain Cromwell is a zealous officer."

"Ay, zealous enough, and pious enough he seemeth; but, I tell thee, he will not stop till he is master of all of us."

"Nay," rejoined the Colonel, "we seek not to pull down one King to set up another; we seek but to restrain the Royal power within just bounds."

“So ye all *say*, and so said the devil when he made war against heaven; but what ye *mean*, or, at least, what some of ye mean, is to uproot everything.”

“Nay,” interposed Rachel, “we must not have these sharp words between thee and my father; let not these unhappy feuds embitter the few affections that remain to us.”

“Thou art right, my Rachel,” said Sir John, “we had best let this subject pass: we cannot agree upon it, Frankland; we both think we are right. God must judge between us, and may he shield this land.”

“Amen,” responded Frankland, and a silence of some minutes ensued. It was broken at last by Frankland.

“When Hubert comes next,” he said, “give him, for me, the thanks which I was too weak to render when we parted: he is a noble youth.”

“He is a good soldier,” replied his father, “and a good servant of the King; would

that he had only learned in this camp the art of war!"

"What meanest thou?" asked his friend.

"He has learned to follow the steps of those who damage the King's cause by their vices more than they aid it by their swords. Hast thou not heard (I thought it was the talk of all Willingham, he added bitterly,) how he has forgotten the honour of his name, and made himself as one of the Rochesters and Buckinghams? Gallantry they call it, forsooth! villainy, I call it! But I am an old man, and times have changed. What was wantonness and villainy when I was young, is gallantry now: that is the word!"

"Something I have heard of this story," replied the Colonel, "but I believe it not: I have seen many men in my wanderings, and methinks I know the marks of honour in a man's face; and if ever they were deeply graven on any brow, it is on that of thy son Hubert."

Rachel, who had sat while Sir John was

speaking with her eyes cast down, raised them, as her father spoke, with a look of thankfulness; and Sir John looked comforted: though he shook his head, as though he was more willing than ready to accept the exculpation of his son.

“Be thou sure,” continued Frankland, “that Hubert can explain this unhappy passage: condemn him not, at least unheard.”

“Can I doubt the fact? All the army knows that he brought into the camp, into his very tent, the daughter of the man who had sheltered him; and men do say the betrothed wife of the man who might have stabbed him on the field and none would have gainsaid it. Was that well in a Knight and a gentleman?”


“Truly; but from whom did the story come?” rejoined Frankland. “Even from that shameless Slasher. *I* know the man, my friend; there is not in his whole heart one ounce of honour or truth. It is enough that *he* is the father of the story to satisfy me



that it is a lie: if the lie is not in the fact, he has glozed it over with lies. The man hates *me*, I know; and if report speaketh true that Hubert found him shirking the *mêlée*, when he should have been in the thick of it, he hates him, and from the self-same cause. I trust in Hubert: dost not thou, my fair daughter?" he said, turning to her with a kind look.

"The cloud is dark upon his name, my father," she replied; "yet have I known him from childhood, and never knew I Hubert Willingham to do aught that was mean or ungenerous."

"Well, well," said the old Knight, "we shall see, we shall see; but whatever may be the truth, I fear he hath made two enemies, and one a Roundhead, Sir Colonel: and they are not, under your favour, gentle haters, though there be among them fast friends;" and extending his hand, he gripped the Colonel's with a pressure more like that of a man of forty than of sixty.



Thus, in mingled talk, did they seek to shut out from their view the hour when they must part. But it came, notwithstanding all their efforts: and sad it was; for none could say, in those times, when parting with a friend, whether his next meeting might not be with his friend's mangled body. Death was stalking through the land in his fiercest panoply, and men felt as they do in a city beleaguered by the plague: each man lived as though the sword of Damocles hung over his head; and when men took leave of each other, it was with the feeling that their greetings were the last on this side the grave.

Let us now return for a while to Manasses and Elijah Gideon.

The fight over, Gideon hastened to his quarters as soon as he could be released from his military duties, and seeking Margery in her sitting-room and not finding her there, he betook himself to the shop; thinking she was, no doubt, with her father.

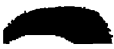
But, as the reader knows, she was not there either ; then, unconscious almost of what was passing through his brain, he went to the chamber of his prisoner, and finding that empty too, he began to dread the truth. Rushing back to the shop, he burst in upon Manasses, saying, in a hoarse voice,

“Where is thy daughter, Manasses?”

“My daughter!” replied Manasses; “where should she be but in her chamber, or in our sitting-room, preparing for my return from the work of this world.”

“She is neither!” almost shouted Elijah. “By the living God!” he exclaimed, forgetting his sanctity, and striking his iron scabbard heavily on the floor, “if this devilish malignant has played me such a trick, I will cleave his skull to the very shoulders.”

“Be angry, but sin not,” said Manasses: “What is all this, friend Elijah? saidst thou my daughter is not in her room, nor in our sitting-room? Perchance she hath gone forth to hear the word.”



“Hear the word!—hear the devil!” shouted Elijah, now well nigh frantic with rage and grief. “I tell thee she hath gone—gone away—and with that cursed malignant.”

“May the Lord forbid!” ejaculated Manasses, now in his turn turning pale with fear and anger. “Nay, I cannot think,” he said, checking himself, “that my Margery would leave her father for the camp of the malignants. Go thou forth, dear Elijah, I pray thee, and inquire for her in the village, while I seek her at the house where the little flock of the godly Ebenezer meet. It is their hour for prayer: and alack! alack! I ought to have been there; but the things of this world will press upon the poor, and the careful man may not leave them undone. But go, good youth, and seek Margery. No, I cannot believe she hath left me.”

Elijah did as he was told, and scoured the village, inquiring at every house where he knew Margery could be; but of course he found her not. Weary and dispirited, and

vowing vengeance upon Hubert, he returned home; and there he beheld a scene not calculated much to console him. Margery lay stretched, apparently lifeless, on a couch in the sitting-room; Manasses was wringing his hands; a tall and grey-bearded Royalist trooper was standing at the door, leaning on his sword, and a score of troopers, mounted, were loitering in the yard about the house.

“She is come back, as thou seest,” said Manasses. “Alack! she hath been away with the malignant, and he hath sent her back with these soldiers. She cannot speak:—her voice I have not heard. Oh! my child! my child!” sobbed the old man, his one good feeling aroused; “arise, speak to me. I will forgive thee all, so thou wilt but speak to me.”

“Old man,” said the trooper, “thou hast nothing to forgive, save that thy daughter did favour the escape of a loyal soldier; and that, methinks, is a good deed: thy

daughter hath not been in a den of thieves, but in the care of our Captain, who is as honest a man as thou, and of our Colonel, who is old enough to be her father. Canst thou not take and read this letter, instead of yelling as if thy flesh were torn with pincers?" and he held out the Colonel's letter.


Manasses was incapable of thinking or acting; he was in the state in which I once saw, under an alarm of fire, an old French artist, who kept his money and his pictures all in the same room, the one scattered about the room, the other in an *escritoire*. Being called on to his help, I found him pacing up and down before his *escritoire*, like a bear in his den, and wringing his hands.

"But," I said, "where is your money?"

"It is there," he said, looking at the *escritoire*, but not putting forth his hand.

"Oh! mon Dieu! mon Dieu! je suis perdu."

"But tell me where, in what drawer?" I cried.



He looked at me, as though he heard but saw nothing; and again began pacing up and down, still ejaculating, "Mon Dieu! mon Dieu! je suis perdu!" but actually incapable of either putting forth his own hand, or telling me where to put mine for him. So it was with Manasses; he was paralysed, and utterly incapable of hearing, still less of understanding any explanation.

Elijah, however, with a scowl, took the letter, and read it for him. As he read, his brow somewhat cleared, and, turning to the trooper, he said,

"It is well that it is so. Had wrong been done to this damsel, not even thy privilege as a safe conduct should have saved thee. I and my fellows would have hewn thee and thine to pieces, and sent your carcases to your master."

"I doubt it not," said the trooper coolly, "if you could have done it: who ever heard of mercy or honour from a Roundhead?"

"Nay, friend," returned Elijah (who, his

temper being pacified, since he was assured Margery was innocent and had received no wrong, became once more the honest soldier and self-possessed man), "thou shouldst not presume upon thy white flag to abuse those who have not wronged thee. Methinks the time has been when thou also wouldst have struck fire, if such a damsel as that was aught to thee, and had been injured."

"Troth, and thou'rt not far from the mark, beloved," replied the old trooper. "But come, I meant no offence: I have brought thee back the damsel unhurt, and as thou seest by our Colonel's letter why she came, and art satisfied, let us part friends. But first take these, which our Captain gave the damsel for thee and the old Roundhead there, who seems yet as if he was staggering drunk;"—and he handed him the two bags.

Elijah examined the contents, and when he found, besides a sum larger by far than he had dreamed of for his captive's ransom,



a letter from Hubert stating briefly the service that Margery had rendered him, and explaining how he had been compelled, by her illness, to take her to his own quarters and have her safely conducted home, he turned to the trooper with now a countenance cleared of all traces of anger.

"Friend," he said, "I have wronged thy Captain in thought; I see that he is an honest youth, and I owe thee amends for the rough welcome I have given to a safe conduct. Come, therefore, with me while the old man revives his daughter, and we will drink together, as becomes honest foes while the truce lasts."

"Verily," replied the King's soldier, "I will not say thee nay; for a Roundhead, thou art a jolly fellow: surely thou hast been of us once."

"Mind thine own business, friend serjeant," said Elijah with a grin; "so we drink together, and I pay the score, fash not thyself about what I have been." And taking

out a few pieces from his bag, he left the room with the soldier.


The clink of the gold Charles' did more for Manasses than all Elijah's exhortations; it struck upon his ear; and, as the breathing of some well-known air of old times has been known to recall the scattered senses of a delirious mind, so the well-known clink of gold vibrated on the brain of Manasses, and restored him to his senses. He took up the bag; he opened it; he counted the pieces; then he read the Colonel's letter. His parental feelings—and they were sincere—were satisfied; his Plutonic feelings (and were they not sincere?) were satisfied; and Manasses, himself again, was able to use sensible instead of frantic means of recovering his daughter, and succeeded. Gently did that hard and griping old man soothe her, and tell her of his faith in her, and bid her fear nothing; and stealthily the while did his hand ever and anon creep into the delightful bag, and dally with the gold pieces.

It seems strange that so much sordidness and so pure a feeling should not only coexist, but be able to be indulged, both sincerely, at one and the same moment; but there are, indeed, "more things in heaven and earth" than we dream of in our philosophy; and that such a combination, touching and yet ridiculous, as that which I have described, is to be met with, I fearlessly assert; and I appeal to the recollections of observant men if it is not so.

## CHAPTER XIII.

## THE MASTER SPIRIT.

WE must now again pass over a few years: the battles of Marston Moor and Naseby had been fought and won by the Parliament; and the former entirely by the bold and skilful charge of Cromwell at the head of his cavalry, when Rupert had, with his usual brave impetuosity, driven in the left wing of the Parliamentary army; and, with his usual want of judgment and coolness, had wasted, in pursuing a broken corps, the precious moments that should have been given



to attacking and routing those that remained whole.



Doubtless, the success of Cromwell at Marston Moor—a success which, without any particular amount of self gratulation, he must have well seen was attributable to his own powers of command—opened Cromwell's eyes to his future career. Before that, I verily believe he had no definite views of personal aggrandisement: at least, if he had, they were locked in the impenetrable mysteries of his own heart; for they are not breathed in his speeches or correspondence, nor are they to be inferred from any portion of his antecedent conduct.

Ambitious he was, no doubt, from his cradle; and secret ambition no doubt spurred him on from the beginning; but, before the battle of Marston Moor, his ambition showed itself only in that stirring activity which leads a man of such character to do with all his heart and with all his soul whatever he does at all, and to urge in an onward career

whatever things and whatever men are under his guidance or control.

There is no quality more generally misunderstood than ambition, probably because so few men are really ambitious; for one must not dignify with the name of ambition, the desire merely for wealth and display. Ambition is by most people supposed to be a definite, early conceived determination, to do some specific thing, — to attain some specific height; and when men who are ambitious have attained some particular height, all the world cries out, "See, how he aimed at that from the first!" They who reason so, know as little of the nature of ambition as they know of the inhabitants of Jupiter. Ambition is an instinct; not a quality of mind that shapes to itself any definite plans at the outset of life: it is the instinct of progress, the instinct of rule.

An ambitious man may be for years without plan, without definite aim; but he cannot rest, he must be doing something; and that




something, it will be found, is always the result of a tendency to impress his mind upon others. When he acts with other men, he does not so much positively *seek* to govern and lead them, as lead them *because he cannot help it*; because his energy and his strong will put him forward to take the lead when others shrink from it. Circumstances occur which he had not foreseen, which no one had foreseen: he acts in them in obedience to his instinct of leading and ruling; and thus he advances, if once the occasion arises which puts him in his right place: always leading, because to lead is his instinct; always advancing, because his power is more and more felt; till he takes the vacant position of command, whatever it may be.

Doubtless, in the march of events, the time does arrive when the ambitious man sees that the post of command must become vacant; when he sees that the reins are dropping from the nerveless hands that ought to hold them; and doubtless then a definite

object and a definite plan do suggest themselves to his mind. But till that occasion occurs, all is vague, all is uncertain, all is chance in his mind as to the future; though in whatever position he is placed, still he impresses his mind on those surrounding him, and leads and rules, without even a conscious effort to do so.

Thus, till after Marston Moor and Naseby, we find no traces in history of any definite plans for self-aggrandisement in Cromwell: we do find him everywhere, and at every step that he took, busy, *remuant*, organising; ruling every body and everything that came within his range of activity; but nothing more. But after that famous battle a change came over him: he seemed at once to become prominent; to become *the man* of the revolution, on whom all eyes were fixed; by whom all things were to be done. He could not but see and feel his position, and from that time visions of empire were no doubt in his brain. Still there is no proof that even






then he contemplated the dethronement of the King; and, probably, his views were then only to control the war and the King's fate, and to rule as the King's General and Minister, if the King would hear reason, and submit to the diminished sovereignty which was his inevitable fate.

The army by this time, from being the servant of the Parliament, had become, as was natural, its master; the self-denying ordinance which had excluded so many officers from command, had passed over Cromwell: not by reason of any particular cunning exercised by Cromwell to escape it, but because he was *the man* without whose guiding and controlling spirit Parliament felt itself powerless; and he was henceforth in name Fairfax's Lieutenant-General: in reality, the commander of the army.

In the same period, Episcopacy and the old liturgy had been abolished, and the Presbyterian form of worship and of Church government, took their places. And then, out

of the army of conflicting sects no longer subjected to the rule of any fixed or uniform hierarchy, arose the famous sect of Independents; the principle of which was something like that of the Quakers, that the gift of preaching and prayer falls indifferently on all men; so that the steel-capped and iron-coated trooper might claim it as well as the trained and clerically-instructed minister: a principle which gave an additional power to the army, by mixing with the practical influence of their right hands and broadswords, the spiritual influence of their religious fervour; and which made them, in effect, much such a band, in point of political strength, as the Templars had used to be in the olden time.

Colonel Frankland had served throughout all these changes immediately under Cromwell, who very soon discovered that he was a clear-headed and dauntless soldier; and who was glad to surround himself as much as he could with officers of that rank and station in



society, which would give a colour to his party of not being the mere dregs of the people.

But Colonel Frankland, though perfectly sincere in his opposition to the King's pretensions to carry everything by the high hand, was of that class of the leaders of his party, who never contemplated anything more than resistance to arbitrary authority: they were not prepared when it came to this,—that the whole framework of the Constitution must be demolished, or the whole fruits of the resistance sacrificed—to go through with the contest in the only way in which it could be fought out. Many such men there were, excellent and estimable men no doubt, but men ill-adapted to wage war with a Monarch whom no adversity could teach to yield, and yet whose authority they could not bring their minds wholly to set aside.

Accordingly, as the tone of the political drama deepened, and time showed that Charles could be brought to no terms, Frankland

recoiled, with others of his class of mind and social position, from the measures of coercion over the person and will of the Sovereign, which the more vigorous leaders began openly to proclaim were necessary, and to carry into effect.

Colonel Frankland was, in fact, one of that class of amiable, and what one may term sentimental, revolutionists—a class to be found in all times—who forget “*que l'on fait pas des revolutions avec de l'eau de rose,*” and are shocked to find that (to copy a *mot* of Horne Tooke's) when they have gone to Hounslow Heath, they must go to Windsor, or give up all they have gained; and being so shocked, shrink from the contest and leave it to other hands. They think themselves mighty virtuous, and speak with becoming horror of the extreme measures that are afterwards taken; forgetful that if *they* had never joined the movement in the beginning, it might never have advanced at all; and that if they, with their *bas de soie* punctilios,

had never abandoned it, they would not have left its leaders with none but coarse and rough instruments who *can* but do their work coarsely and roughly.

While the King was the prisoner of the army, after the Scotch had delivered him up to the Parliamentary commanders, and the leaders of the army had very quietly and coolly sent a cornet of horse to bring him away from Holmby, it is a matter of historical notoriety that Cromwell and Ireton, and the other leaders, were in continual negotiation with Charles for a pacific settlement of the Government. The *basis of the negotiations*, as it would now in diplomatic tongue be called, was, that the King should be restored to the throne with fixed powers and a fixed royal allowance; that Parliament should also have its powers fixed by an Act of Settlement, and that the Lieutenant-General should hold the office of Lieutenant-General of the kingdom,—in fact be a sort of Premier: of course the other great

leaders of the Parliamentary party were to hold high and responsible offices.

In fact, as nearly as we can collect from the documents of the period, Cromwell's proposals amounted to placing the Government as nearly as possible on the footing on which it was finally put on the abdication of James II. But though, beyond doubt, Cromwell and his coadjutors were sincere in their desire for such a *raccommodement*, the Parliament, and the republicans in it and in the army, had no desire for such a mode of pacification; and had it taken place, Cromwell knew full well that there were many in the Parliament and in the army, who would have cried out "Traitor," upon him: in fact, the Lieutenant-General knew that he was playing a game dangerous to himself, perhaps even more dangerous than if he had rigorously pursued his advantages against the King, as he might have done.

Charles on the other hand seemed sincere; but though Cromwell continued to treat with

him as if he were so, he had his misgivings, and, placing no implicit trust in the King, was anxious to prepare himself for a breach of the Royal faith, while he was still negotiating on the footing of the King's sincerity. In pursuance of this policy he was anxious to sound Frankland, of whose services he would willingly continue to avail himself if possible, but in whom he feared there was not the metal that he could work with, if the King should at last break off negotiations.

The Lieutenant-General's *modus operandi* in matters of this sort was peculiar: he did not in general, as most commanders would do, send for an officer when he wished to confer with him, and open and discuss the matter of business as such. He was fond of taking odd times and odd ways of introducing a subject, on which, perhaps, *his* mind had been long dwelling; and, as it were, of *pouncing upon his man* when the other's was unprepared, and therefore the more likely to

be clear and open. Thus he did with Colonel Frankland: he neither sent for him to speak on the subject, nor did he touch upon it in the council of officers, while the negotiations with the King were discussed. But one morning, when he had been, as was frequently his wont, taking personally a part in the drill of some recruits of the Colonel's regiment, and with his own hands teaching them the use of their pistols and musquetoons, he abruptly turned away, and, taking the Colonel's arm, began walking with him towards his quarters.

"Ah! Colonel Frankland," he said, "it is a weary task that the Lord hath put upon me, to settle this kingdom! and those men whom just now, thou and I were teaching the use of weapons of war, may again before long have to handle them."

"I trust not, my Lord General," replied Frankland. "The King surely will settle the Government in peace and quiet."

"Ay, Francis Frankland; but if he should



not, what then? Dost thou not know that even now Harrison and the rest of them, are ready to cut our throats for dealing at all with this poor King? And if he should play us false again, I ask thee, what then?"

"May God forbid the King should take such a course. Truly if he did, 'twill be a difficult thing to know what course we should take."

"Ay, truly," responded Oliver. "It would be a sore trial to the tender conscience. Yet if the King refuseth such terms as good men offer him, shall this kingdom be again plunged in blood for his obstinacy? Shall we not rather, seeing the finger of the Lord in the matter, stretch out the arm of strength, and take the ruling of these realms from the hands that cannot hold it?"

"Surely you cannot think of dethroning the King altogether?" asked Frankland, with a look of horror.

"Nay," said Cromwell, "I said not that, Colonel Frankland; but if the King will not

agree to our terms, what dost thou recommend?"

"Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof," replied the Colonel. "I will not think that Charles can be so obstinately blind as to refuse the chance he now has of settling the Government, and recovering the blessing of peace."

The Lieutenant-General said no more, and soon after they separated, each to his quarters.

"Ay," said Cromwell to himself, when Frankland had left him; "thus it is with these *gentlemen*: they will still believe the King can do no wrong; and if he doeth wrong, they will be amazed: yea, amazed and helpless! On Frankland, and such as Frankland, I cannot count, if the King meaneth falsely." And a dark frown passed over his stern face, as he grasped the handle of his sword more tightly, and walked into his apartments.

He had hardly been seated a few minutes

when Ireton entered, handing him a paper, and saying,

“Methinks this will do: see, he hath signed this draught, and pledged himself to all we have ever asked.”

Cromwell took the paper, and reading it over carefully, said,

“If the King keeps to this, there will be peace in the land. Men say I am ambitious, Ireton; does this look like it? Might I not have been——?” He stopped; even before his own son-in-law, he would not speak out in words the visions that had passed through his scheming brain.

Presently he resumed: “But when in after years our children’s children shall hear of the deeds of this time, shall they not say that I loved my country? Aye, truly: I have not shrunk from shedding my own blood, and that freely; and yet some will call me traitor to the Parliament. The Parliament! the fools! would they have this England even as a wild den of thieves,

with every man's hand against his neighbour's throat, and none to smite the evil-doer with a strong hand?"

He rose and strode up and down the room.

"Lieutenant-General of the kingdom!" he said; "it is well: not first—not alone! Yet it is much: and there would have been more blood to shed. Alas! the blood that has been shed already weigheth on me!"

Thus he went on with these half-unintelligible interjections, obviously in one of those states of dreamy excitement to which he was subject; though he never gave way to them except before his own family. While he thus paced the apartment, Ireton, leaning back in his chair, sate waiting patiently for his great father-in-law to become rational, as he thought: for all that Ireton saw in the arrangements proposed, was that *he* should hold a high office with high emoluments, and that was enough for him. A single knock was now heard at the door.

In an instant the General was still; firm, erect as a statue, with not a trace of agitation on his face.

"Come in," he said; and a man of short stature, with a spare countenance and figure, and a look indicating nothing—literally nothing—entered; casting about, as he entered, a vacant stare, which, nevertheless, embraced every person and every object in the room.

"How now, Jonah?" said the General; "what is thy business with me?"

Jonah glanced at Ireton.

"Thou mayest speak before him," said Cromwell.

"My Lord," said Jonah, "I have news for thee that may not be pleasant to hear."

"Out with it then at once, that we may meet the mischief without loss of time," said Cromwell; who, as all readers of history know, could be as brief and explicit at times, as he could be windy and unintelligible at others.

What the communication was must be gathered hereafter; but whatever it was, it produced a powerful effect upon Oliver. His large eyes did not flash—real historical eyes do not flash—but they glowed like fire, and his features seemed almost convulsed with rage; but he was silent, and dismissed the messenger, saying,

“Tell thou no man, on thy life. The Blue Boar, saidst thou, and nine to-morrow night?”

“Even so, Lord General,” said the man, and withdrew.

General Cromwell returned that evening to his own house with a gloomy brow and a careworn look. The kind and fond reception of his wife and children, which in general used to cheer and soothe him after the fatigues and harassments to which he was now almost daily a prey, seemed to have no charm for him; and he sat, waiting for the evening meal, moody, gloomy, scarcely noticing those to whom his manner had, in

---

more peaceful days, been always full of affectionate regard, mixed with even boyish playfulness.

“Alas! my child,” said Mrs. Cromwell in low tones to her daughter Elizabeth (Oliver’s favourite daughter; she who afterwards became Mrs. Claypole, and bequeathed almost her curse to her father on her deathbed). Alas! my child, I would to God that thy father had never mingled in this strife: his very nature is changed; and the cares and anxieties of this weary war embitter every moment of his life. See, Elizabeth, if thou canst soothe him. I have lost my power,” she added, with a sigh. “Time was when a look or a caress from me would smooth his brow, and chase away such cares as he *then* had. But now, it passeth my skill.”

Elizabeth Cromwell approached her father. “My father,” she said, “thou art unwell, I fear me; thy looks are so stern and haggard.”

.

Oliver turned his eyes full upon her, and they filled with tears.

“Oh!” he said, in a low and sad voice, “had it but pleased the Lord that I should have remained as I was when I tilled my own land, and sat in peace under the shadow of my own vine and fig-tree, I should have been thankful. The burthen that is cast upon me is too heavy: yea, it beareth my soul to the earth;” and his head dropped on his breast, as if he were utterly exhausted.

“What then has happened, my dear husband?” interposed Mrs. Cromwell, “what hath happened thus to disturb thee?”

“What has happened?” repeated Cromwell, suddenly rising, with the look of a chafed lion, and stamping his foot on the floor with an expression of passion; “have I not told thee that I have been for weeks seeking to bring the King to reason? did I not tell thee I believed I had succeeded? did I not tell thee that he would come to our terms,



and that peace would again be in England? See here," and he pulled out of his pocket the King's letter; "in this he promiseth all that we had asked, more than we expected: fool that I was to believe a King, and that King a Stewart! they were ever a false race. In this," he continued, "he promiseth to agree to all—to all, I say—that I had required: not to all that the *Parliament* required, but to all that *I* required; and that is enough. But the ink was scarce dry with which he wrote this false document (striking it with his hand), when he wrote to the Queen other letters, which shew that he is faithless; even as the worst of the sycophants and debauchees of his Court. And shall I keep terms with this man? shall *I*, who command the army, shall I betray my soldiers and England into the hands of this false-tongued King? Nay, I would rather be torn in pieces."

"But art thou *sure*, my father," urged Elizabeth, putting her arm tenderly round his

neck, "art thou quite sure that the King playeth thee false? It is not like his royal nature so to deal with thee."

"Aye, girl, I am sure; or nearly sure: but I will be *quite sure* ere I take my course."

"And if thou dost assure thyself, my father, what will be thy course?" asked Elizabeth somewhat timidly.

Oliver answered not; but he turned on her a look that she forgot not for years. In it spoke passion and bitter disappointment; stern and fixed resolve; and no pity: and she saw that her father was in no mood to be trifled with. Still she persevered; for, as is well known, she affected the Royal cause, and dreaded for her father the greatness that all men saw he was rapidly attaining; and she dreaded still more the steps, the crimes through which he might be driven by ambition in compassing it.


"My dearest father," she said, "oh! withdraw from this perilous path. Let not

the lust of power beguile thee to thy undoing. What canst thou do if the King is indeed false (though I will not believe it), what canst thou do—pressed as thou art by bloody-minded men—but acts which I shudder, which even thy strong heart must shudder, at contemplating? Bethink thee, thou art the leader: on thee it will fall to plan whatever is to be done; on thee will fall all the responsibility, all the load. Think of our happy home when we were but plain country folk at Huntingdon, and knew neither greatness nor toil, save the daily toil of our honest work. In those days, my father, thy brow was clear, thy voice was cheerful, thy heart was light; and we, my mother and thy children, knew happiness. Alas! now we know it not: thou leavest not thy house but we dread the evening, lest thou shouldst not return a living man. And when thou dost return, thou art pressed to the very earth with cares and weighty troubles, and we are nought to thee.”

Oliver, while she was speaking, kept his eyes fixed upon her with a look of mingled fondness and admiration; but he spoke not a word, and he drew his wife and his daughter to his breast, and wept: but still he made no sign.

“Wilt thou not hear our prayers, my father?” continued Elizabeth, still more urgently; “wilt thou not abandon this cause, that thou callest the cause of the nation, and be once more the father of thy Elizabeth?”

“My child,” answered Oliver, at length, “it is too late: withdraw, I cannot; though thou almost persuadest me,” he said with a sad smile. “But this I will promise, I will do nought without *certainly* that I am betrayed; and if I am, even then—yea, even then—though the man meriteth nothing at my hands; for thy sake, for thy mother’s sake, I will save life, if it be God’s will that I may prevail. Say no more, my sweet daughter; we will dismiss the subject: let



us talk of other things:" and with that wonderful power of self-abstraction, that enormous concentrativeness (as the phrenologists call it) which Cromwell possessed, he cleared his countenance of all traces of anxiety and passion; and, as he and his family sat at their evening meal, talked in a lively, even in a jocose way, of subjects of family interest, and of the passing events of the day, so as effectually to shut out the possibility of any recurrence by his wife and daughter to the topic which was in reality absorbing his whole thoughts.

## CHAPTER XIV.

## A PURITAN DECLARATION.

WE left Rachel at Willingham Hall, after the departure of her father, with her young heart weighed down by the rumours that had reached them of the unworthy conduct of Hubert. She could not believe them: at least she could not believe that Hubert would be so false to her, so false to honour, as to betray the rights of hospitality; to bring misery into the house of one who had sheltered him wounded and sick, and saved his life. Still the facts stated were not explained,

and they were enough to disquiet the mind of one who loved Hubert and loved his honour as she did. No news came from him, except at rare intervals, and then but brief notice that he was well and unhurt amid the chances of war; but of the circumstances attending his escape, not one word, even to his father, did his letters breathe.

Now Hubert's silence on this topic arose precisely from that high chivalrous feeling which Rachel had justly attributed to him. He would not mix the name of Margery in an affair which had been the subject of ribaldry: he had silenced the ribaldry in the camp, and he knew not that the base hound, who dared not whisper it before him, had wafted it over to the ears of Sir John and Rachel; he sought therefore to bury it in total oblivion; and because he was silent, Rachel was brooding over the matter, and feeling that a cloud had come between her and Hubert. Thus, as it often happens (for a while), will a man's best feelings work

him evil. Thus is sometimes affection poisoned by the busy workings of imagination, when a few plain words of explanation would clear away all that is painful. But those few plain words are not always, in real life any more than in novels, spoken at the right time.

While thus the venom of Slasher was working in the halls of the great, not less suffering was being borne by our humble friends, Elijah and Margery. Elijah, satisfied of Margery's innocence, had taken it for granted, in his rough and simple heart, that now the young Cavalier was gone, the coast lay clear for him; and great was his astonishment, great his vexation, when he found that Margery, though kind and considerate to him, showed no disposition to listen to his attempts at any language warmer than that of friendship; that she seemed never gay and laughing as she used to be, but grave, and at times almost sad.

Poor girl! she had been in a dream: a



dream of happiness while it lasted; but she had been awakened from it by a rough shock, and her heart was bruised. Elijah was not refined enough to make it out. But at last the time came for quitting her father's roof; and when, Reading being taken, and a portion of the army was marched elsewhere, Elijah determined to bring things to a close; which he did with the mixture of soldierly frankness and Puritanic speechifying, that belonged to his two inconsistent educations.

Manasses was in the shop as usual, weighing out spices and groceries to the godly; and Margery was in her little sitting parlour, musing, and in that dreamy state which we all know, in which it would be difficult to fix on any thought and say, that was the thought passing in the mind; when Corporal Elijah entered, fully armed and equipped for the march.

"I have come," he said, "Margery Broadbelt, to bid thee farewell; but before going

from thee, I would fain speak a word with thee."

Margery smiled frankly and replied, "My father and I will miss thy kindness, friendd Elijah; thou hast been almost as a son unto him."

"It is of that, even that, I wished to speak to thee. I tell thee, Margery," he continued, warming as he got nearer the subject, "since I have been thy father's guest I am a changed man: I thought I loved nothing but my colours and my fire-lock; but I have found, Margery, that I love thee: wilt thou have me for thy husband?" he added solemnly, "I will love thee and cherish thee, and protect thee with the strong hand of a soldier of the Lord."

Margery took his hand kindly, but without agitation.

"Would to God," she replied, "Elijah, I could make thee happy; but, alas! I am not fit to be the wife of a true man such as thou."

“Wherefore not?” urged Elijah. “If thou dost not yet love me, thou mayest learn to do so. Thou shalt not want kindness to teach thee to love thy husband.”

“It may not be,” returned the damsel: “be a brother to me, if thou canst; as such I love thee: but I shall never love husband in this world. Nay,” she continued, as he seemed inclined to press his suit, “urge me not, dear friend Elijah; I cannot love thee as thou deservest to be loved. Let this day be forgotten between thee and me, and think of me only as thy sister.”

Elijah looked very dejected, and indeed felt the blow very keenly.

“The will of the Lord be done,” he said (but he did not seem, by his tone, to be at all satisfied with the Lord’s dispensation): “I will be to thee as a brother, Margery; and if in these times of trouble thou wantest a brother’s help, call upon my name, and if it may be heard without a miracle, I will hear and help thee.” So saying, he grasped

her hand, and brushing a tear from his eyes with something like an oath, he strode away.

I would not, for some gold pieces, have been the Royalist soldier to come across Elijah's broadsword in the next battle.

## CHAPTER XV.

## THE COUNCIL OF WAR.

AN old inn, then, as now, called the Blue Boar, stood in Holborn, near what is now called New Turn-style: whether there was any turn-style I have not been able to ascertain; but certainly behind the tavern were fields and open ground to a very considerable extent, running down from Holborn, by the side of the old buildings of Lincoln's Inn Square, to the Strand; and Holborn itself was a mere road, with a few houses on either side.

In the public room of the inn sat, at a table apart from the throng of occupants, two troopers of the Parliamentary army; both large and strong men, and one of them with some marks about his countenance denoting a rank higher than that of a common trooper. But that did not, in those days, attract attention, as it was no uncommon thing to find gentlemen in the ranks, and butchers and tailors and the like, wearing the baldric of the officer. It was about half-past eight in the evening, and as the hour advanced and the crowd of customers began to diminish, these two men appeared to become a little anxious.

“What, sir troopers,” said mine host, coming to them, “do ye not like your liquor, that ye leave it untasted? Are ye waiting for friends, that ye look so frequently into the yard?”

“We do expect a friend, mine host,” replied the deep harsh voice of the elder, “but we do not dislike the liquor; in token

---

whereof," he said, "I will show thee a trick of the Temple," and he took up the flagon, containing a good pint and a half of strong ale, and, putting it to his lips, drank it off at a draught.\* "Now, mine host, fill me that with good humming ale again, for we have far to ride when we have seen our friend."

"By the Lord," exclaimed the host, "but ye must have been a Cavalier some day! Hast thou been a Templar?"†

"Nay, friend, I have not," replied the trooper; "but give me the ale, and so I pay thy reckoning, do not thou care whether I was once Cavalier, or what else I may have been. Methinks thou must draw for Cavaliers and Roundheads alike."

\* I have heard that there was an old custom (lately discontinued) at the Temple, to pass round among the students, on certain days, a huge silver-gilt goblet, containing a pint and a half of sherry and tent mixed. And as the butler was allowed by the benchers a certain sum for the whole, it was a standing joke against him, for the students, or as many as could perform such a feat, to toss off the whole pint and a half, and so, mulct the butler's pocket.

† Cromwell had been a law student, but of Lincoln's Inn.

“Aye, marry do I, fair sir,” answered the host; “and, i’ faith, if the gold is good, I ask not whether it cometh from Parliament or King.”

Their liquor was brought, and while they were drinking it, or appearing to drink it, the clatter of a horse’s feet was heard, and a countryman dismounting, staggered in, apparently overcome with fatigue, and called for food and drink. A look—it was instantaneous—passed between him and the host.

“I have left my horse with the stable-keeper,” said the countryman; “see that he be cared for, if thou canst give me a bed for the night.”

“Aye, truly I can,” replied the host; “but hast thou aught with thee to bring in here?”

“I have but some saddle-bags, friend, and they can be brought in when the poor beast has been rubbed down: there needs no haste.”

The two troopers looked at the new comer, and the result of their scrutiny was obviously



not satisfactory, for the elder said to the younger, apparently not liking to be heard, and yet loud enough to be in fact heard,

“This is not he.”

“No,” replied the other, “he will not come to-night: we cannot wait for him!” and calling, after finishing their ale, for their reckoning, they paid it and quietly went to the stables to saddle their horses. But when they left those stables, they took with them the countryman’s saddle: and they had ridden half-way to Hampton Court before the over-wily countryman found out that he had been circumvented by the two rough-looking troopers.

“Now, Ireton,” said the Lord General quickly, when they had nearly reached the point where they had left a guard in waiting, “see whether Jonah hath told truth.”

Ireton drew his dagger, and with the point of it ripped up the saddle, and in its under folds was that famous letter addressed by Charles to the Queen, containing the fatal words that proved the falseness and sealed

the doom of Charles Stewart. Then, indeed, Cromwell knew that the King was playing him false: then, indeed, did that stern heart resolve that between him and the King there could be no peace,—that it was Charles or Cromwell.\*

When Cromwell returned to the camp, he forthwith called together the council of officers. A stern array they were. There was Harrison, with his tall spare form; his soldierly, and almost stately bearing; although he had sprung from the lowest ranks of the people: there was Desborough, coarse, ungainly, with the lowest greed in his eyes,—the very impersonation of the soldier who is a soldier for plunder and nothing else: there was the noble chivalrous-minded Fairfax: and there was our grave and straightforward Colonel

\* I need scarcely remind the reader, that while King Charles was negotiating with Cromwell, and had written to him, agreeing to terms, he had written at the same time letters to the Queen, which were discovered much in the way described; saying that he had been obliged to temporize with the rebels, but that when he got them into his power, he would treat them to a hempen cord, instead of a silk garter.

Frankland; and many others, men of rank in the party. But all looked earnest and stern: as, indeed, well they might, for the fate of a King and a kingdom hung upon their resolves; the people being at that time exhausted with the turmoil and the changes of the war, and leaving in fact the whole conduct of affairs in the hands of the army, or rather of its chiefs.

"Gentlemen," said the Lieutenant-General, when they had all taken their seats, "the time has arrived for decision; we may not longer dally with these matters, and waste precious time in negotiations. I would it had pleased God that the King——"

"Let us have no kings," interrupted Harrison.

Cromwell heeded not the interruption, but went on:

"I would it had pleased God that the King should have seen that this poor kingdom crieth for peace; I would that he could have been brought to see that a fair settle-

ment of these unhappy disputes might still be open, if he would yield to our just demands. But, alas! his eyes are blinded; he will see nought but the power he once had, and he cannot be brought to believe that we, even this army, have been chosen as an instrument to settle the kingdom. The soldiers cry aloud that he is a tyrant, and that he must be dealt with as a tyrant. And, alack! what can we say to them? What sayst thou, Colonel Harrison?"

"I say," replied Harrison, "with the soldiers, that Charles Stewart hath played the part of a tyrant and a traitor to the people. What! because he hath been called King, are we to truckle and bend before him, as though King and God were one thing? If, as they say themselves, God gives kingdoms into the keeping of kings, are they not to answer for their misdeeds if they trample upon the people's liberty instead of protecting it? But I say, away with such doctrine! I say the King derives his authority

from the people, and the powers that gave it may take it away.

“Aye,” put in Desborough, “let us have an end of all this foolery of negotiating, and writing, and treating with the tyrant. He but seeks to fool us and gain time; and when he has come back and got us in his clutches, he will hang us instead of making us dukes and marquesses. I say we should dally no longer: let him be tried, for his treason to the people.”

“Thou art ever dreaming of dignities, and titles, and pelf, Desborough,” responded Harrison; “and a pretty duke thou wouldst make. But we should have done with such fooleries. What need hath the land of king and nobles? Were not the Romans as great as we, when Julius Cæsar and Scipio were consuls, and carried the armies of Rome into Gaul?” (A slight smile crossed the features of Fairfax at this historical escapade of Harrison, but he made no remark). “Are not the Switzers and the Dutch freer and

happier with their republics than ever this kingdom was under the tyrant Harry, and the still greater tyrant, Elizabeth, and under the fool James, and his son, who is not much less of a fool? I say we should be a Commonwealth, where there shall be no ranks but those of merit and godliness, and the saints only shall be rulers over the people."

"Nay, but," interposed Fairfax, "methinks we must not forget that there are many in this realm who think the King has a right, though he hath used it unwisely. There are many who say we have ever been a kingdom, and that a Commonwealth will not suit the customs of our people. Enough blood has been shed: if we can spare the shedding of more, all good men must rejoice. I think it would be wiser and more befitting us as men who have the good of our country at heart, yet to come to an understanding with the King, if it may be, and so to settle the Government that we may

---

have freedom without more of war and bloodshed."

"Truly," said Colonel Frankland, "I agree with your Lordship. We draw not the sword to kill the King, nor to uproot the constitution of this realm, but to assure our freedom from arbitrary power. And if we do put down the King and set up a Commonwealth, will it be long before one rises up and becomes Ruler: aye, perhaps more tyrannical than Charles? Methinks the King is truly seeking his deliverance, and the deliverance of the land from the scourge of war; and that if we will but bide our time, we shall yet obtain his consent to our terms."

"Ah! Colonel Frankland, Colonel Frankland," interrupted Oliver, "thou art a brave man in the field, but a guileless one thou art in the Council Chamber: thou dost believe all men as true and honourable as thyself. What an' if I were to tell thee that now, even now, the King doth meditate treachery! What if I were to tell thee

that while he deals with us in treaty with one hand, with the other he plots treason against the army and the people?"

"Hast thou proof of that, General Cromwell?" said Harrison.

"Yea," replied the Lieutenant-General, "I have proof; and, therefore, gentlemen," he said, looking round, "did I call ye together, that we may determine what shall be done."

"Treat no more! treat no more!" shouted the voices of all except Fairfax and Frankland. "Let the King abide his fate."

"Amen," replied Cromwell. "I have prayed, yea, earnestly and with tears, that this thing might not be. But the Lord hath dealt with the King, even as he dealt with Pharaoh; he hath hardened his heart, that he will not listen to counsel; and if he fall," he added in a lower tone, "his blood be on his head. Gentlemen, with Lord Fairfax's permission, the Council is at an end;" and rising, he bowed to the officers as they all withdrew, leaving himself and Ireton alone.



“It must be so, it must be so, Ireton,” said Cromwell, in a voice of much passion. Truly I have striven, thou knowest it, even at the risk of my own life (for thou knowest there have been plots against me, even in the army), to save this poor King from himself and his idiot friends. But the die is cast; he hath rejected aid; he must fall; yea, he must fall: and kings fall not but to die. Would it could have been otherwise! But the hand of Providence is upon this house of Stewart. Yet it will grieve my very soul to see this King——” he said, with a voice faltering with emotion; and that stern man burst into a flood of tears.


Cromwell is well known to have been subject to fits of this kind. There are foolish people who are determined to see in the hero of their worship nothing but beauty and virtue; and there are equally foolish people who, when they have made a man, real or historical, a devil in their imagination, seek in every circumstance attributed to him, evidences

of his devilry. Thus, there are persons so prejudiced against Oliver Cromwell—so saturated with the stale theory of his hypocrisy—that they attribute every action of his life, however trivial, however natural, to a systematic hypocrisy; and when such persons read in history of his expressing passionate regrets at the tragedies in which he had to take a part, and of his bursts of passion and feeling, they set it all down as acting and hypocrisy.

The truth is, that Cromwell was of a character possessing a singular, but still not unnatural, composition. He was ambitious, imaginative, kind-hearted, and yet stern. Firm in his purpose, immoveable in his plans—as most ambitious men are, who have sufficient sternness of character to enable them to act a distinguished part—he was at the same time tender-hearted enough to feel for the sufferings of others: imaginative and sensitive enough to be subject to almost hysterical fits of passionate sentiment. Hence

Cromwell could devise the grandest plans of political change, and could firmly persevere in the measures necessary to carry them into effect; although the carrying those plans into effect might be the unavoidable cause of much suffering, public and private. But hence, also, he grieved over the sufferings he felt himself compelled to cause; and could weep, even as a woman, for the miseries that he believed himself compelled by a stern necessity to see inflicted.

It was no hypocrisy in him when he wept for the fate of the unhappy Charles, though he nevertheless deliberately acted as an instrument in it. He was as sincere in his feeling of pity and sympathy, as he was firm and remorseless in his stern resolve to act in what he believed to be his duty and his mission. Men may differ on the question whether he was mistaken or not in his notion of what was his mission; but it is a strange infatuation, and a strange ignorance of human nature, which would impute hypo-




crisy in every case where feelings of pity are evinced, though the acts which—under a sense of duty, true or mistaken—a man may perform, are stern and severe.

## CHAPTER XVI.

## WILLINGHAM HALL GARRISONED.

CAPTAIN SLASHER had contrived to get himself sent on a visit to Willingham Hall, with a small detachment of his troop. Sir John, anticipating an attack on the house by a corps of the Parliamentary army, had applied for aid, to garrison his little fortress; and though properly the duty would have fallen upon a junior officer; yet, as the junior officers all tried to avoid it, from a desire to be with the army and partake of its glories or disasters, Slasher, with a perfectly



Roman fortitude, sacrificed himself on the altar of his country's good; thinking that, in the first place, there was much less chance of fighting at Willingham than with the army; secondly, that if there were fighting, it would be much more comfortable to fight behind walls than in the open field; and, thirdly, that, in the intervals of fighting, it would be much more agreeable to be living in clover, with all the luxuries of a rich man's house and a very charming young lady to flirt with, than to eat ammunition beef and black bread three or four days in the week for the glory of the Royal cause. Therefore, putting all these things together, and affecting to consider the expedition to Willingham the post of danger, Slasher accepted the command of the little garrison that was to be, and in due course found himself installed there.

Hubert had not the remotest conception of the dirty work that Slasher had already been about, in the way of injuring his fair

name in the very house of his father; or he would, of course, have taken care either that Slasher should not go there, or that, if he did, he should be preceded by a *signalement* of his character, as complete as that of a traveller's person in a modern passport. But having no suspicion of the conduct of Slasher, it comported not with his notions of honour and chivalry, to say one word against a brother officer to those for and with whom he was going to serve. Slasher went, therefore, to Willingham Hall accompanied by no index to his character and purposes, beyond that which his demeanour and conduct were likely to furnish.

The old Knight received him with the honourable welcome which he would have given to any officer wearing King Charles' uniform. It was enough for him that an officer served in the King's cause, to make him hold out to him the hand of friendship; and though he was a very nice discriminator between a gentleman and a swash buckler,

yet even the sins of the latter, though they might be red as scarlet, were cleansed as white as the driven snow, in the old Cavalier's eyes, by the Royal uniform, now that the King was in danger.

"Thrice welcome, sir," was his greeting as he met the gallant Captain at the entrance to his gate, and escorted him into the house with all honour. "Thrice welcome, as a friend in need and a gentleman serving his Majesty."

"Sir," said Slasher, with a low bow (which, from its springiness, Sir John saw at once was not the bow of a thorough bred), "I am honoured in being permitted to be the commander of this little garrison; and I trust," he added, as he caught sight of Rachel, "the *preux* chevalier of this young lady."

Rachel made a slight and rather stiff obeisance; not that she knew any more of Captain Slasher than Sir John did, but there was that about him which liked her



not: a kind of swagger, as who should say, "See the conquering hero comes,"—a sort of impudent air, to which she was not accustomed, and which she instinctively repelled with the quiet dignity of a well-born and well-bred woman.


After the first greetings had passed, and the Captain had partaken of what the Knight called some slight refreshment, the hour of supper being still somewhat distant—which slight refreshment would, however, have appeared to one of our modern appetites a vast feast, consisting, as it did, of a huge pasty, and divers dishes of cold game, flanked by a goblet containing at least a quart of strong ale, and a brace of flasks of Burgundy;—after, I say, having thus fortified himself, and taken due care to toast the King's health, the Captain proposed to his host to make a *reconnaissance* of the defences.

"For," as he said, "you know, Sir John, that these rascally Roundheads, though they

are knaves at heart, know how to fight and to storm fortresses; and we must be ready for them, sir: we must be ready for them."

"Ay, that will we," replied the Knight, "if all that my old experience and your young courage and military skill, Captain, can provide, shall have any effect. But come, let us away and survey our fort."

Slasher, though not of præterhuman courage, was an intelligent and clear-headed man, and really understood his profession well: in going over the house and the defences, therefore, he expressed his views with a degree of clearness and precision, and pointed out various matters of military precaution and arrangement with a degree of accuracy, in a military and engineering point of view, which quite won Sir John's heart, and led the worthy Knight to look upon the Captain as a mighty man of war: so that, when they returned to supper, Sir John treated his guest with a very marked degree



of respect, and pressed upon him, though it needed not much pressing, his choicest wines.

“Now, Sir John,” said the Captain, throwing himself back in his chair, as he lazily sipped, after an ample meal, some exquisite Burgundy, “what are your reports about the state of the enemy? Are the rascals near us?”

“My servants tell me there is a body of them encamped at Henley, and they might be here any day in a couple of hours.”

“Ha!” said the Captain, “so near as that; we must, then, set a guard to-night.”

“Surely,” replied Sir John; “we must be watchful day and night: I mistrust the rogues, and I doubt not they have spies about. I would wager a gold piece now, they know already that thou art here and what thy force is.”

“Dost thou know who commands?” asked the Captain.

“Cornet Joyce, if my people are rightly informed; and a stout soldier he is, they

say, though he was but a tailor's apprentice."

"The base knave!" exclaimed the Captain, twisting his moustache, with a very fierce look: "and what other officers?"

"None with commissions, that I know of; but one of their non-commissioned officers is a somewhat famous man in his grade, Serjeant Gideon: men say he is a very fire-eater in fight."

Slasher started slightly; for he knew what Gideon was, from his experience at the siege of Reading, and was by no means pleased to hear of his being one of his foes. He knew, moreover, that Elijah was a suitor of Margery, and he well remembered the pretty Margery from the glimpse he had of her in the glacis of Reading: indeed he had her in view when he was so ready to proceed to Willingham Hall, as he fully purposed availing himself of his position there—at no great distance from Reading—to seek out the vicinity of Margery and amuse himself with a little


flirtation with her ; never doubting that she would be sensible of the honour of the attentions of so gallant and, as he fancied, so captivating a gentleman as himself. But he liked not the proximity of the grim Elijah, as an interloper in his sport : nevertheless, he was not, even by that fear, to be put off from the indulgence of his vicious propensities.

It was a few days after the Captain arrived at Willingham Hall, that Margery was sauntering through the fields in the neighbourhood of Reading ; she had a book in her hand, and her eyes were bent mechanically upon its pages, but her thoughts were far away. She still could not wholly shut out the image of the gentle, courteous Hubert ; though she had taxed herself again and again with the folly—the wickedness—of allowing her thoughts to stray towards one who she felt had not, and never could have, any other feeling than gratitude towards her. Still his image would rise before her, and

recall the memory of those happy hours, when, watching by him in his weakness, he had enchanted her young imagination with tales of foreign lands, and of chivalry and poetry, and she had allowed herself to be carried into a dreamy world of romance. Then she thought of the honest, though rough, affection of Elijah, and she taxed herself with ingratitude to him; for she felt that she was trying the heart of a man who loved her, and who, of her own degree, was a more fitting object for her affection. Thus she walked on, musing and dreaming, unconscious of the approach of a party of mounted soldiers, till they were almost upon her.

“What, my pretty maiden,” cried the foremost of them, “art thou dreaming of thy true love, that we have almost ridden over thee before thou hearest our horses’ feet?”

Margery started and, blushing deeply, looked around as if for help; but none was at hand, and she began walking on rapidly towards her home.



“Nay,” continued the trooper, riding on and overtaking her, “the King’s soldiers do not often fall in with such a pretty maiden as thee ; and they deserve some better treatment than this, that thou shouldst run from them as if they were robbers.” So saying, he stooped from his horse and chucked her under the chin.

“If you are indeed the King’s soldiers,” said Margery, recovering her presence of mind with her indignation at the familiarity of the soldier, “methinks you would better serve the King than by insulting his people. The Roundheads, as you call them, deal not so with the maidens of our people.”

“Ah !” said the trooper, “art thou a Roundhead, my pretty wench ? I guessed as much, by thy sanctified look, and thy very grave little cap. But Roundhead or Royalist, thou shalt not escape me thus. We must have a little talk together. Whither art thou going now ?”

“I am going home, sir,” replied Margery,

becoming frightened, and thinking she had better be very civil; "and I pray thee not to prevent me."

"And where is thy home, my pretty lass?"


"Even in the village close by," replied Margery; "where my father abides."

"And thy father's name?"

"Manasses Broadbelt," said the young girl, still walking as fast as she could; hoping to get near enough to be within reach of help."

"I have heard of him," rejoined the trooper; "he is a bitter Roundhead, and some day we will have a reckoning with him: I warrant me he hath bags of gold and other things that will make rare plunder for us jolly boys, that he has sucked out of the bowels of the godly. Ha, ha!" and he laughed loudly and coarsely at his own pleasantry. "But not so fast, not so fast, my girl; thou art not going home yet," said he, seizing her by the arm.

"Let me go, fellow!" cried Margery, now





thoroughly roused, though frightened. "Let me go, if thou art a man, and not one of those devils who scour the country and abuse honest people, and make them hate the very name of a King's soldier!"

"So ho! so ho!" exclaimed the soldier, laughing. "Be still, pretty one, and I will not harm thee; but thou must get up on my saddle, that I may give thee a holy kiss, as ye would call it: thinkest thou to keep such lips as those for rascally Roundheads? Come hither, Will," he called, turning to one of the others; "come and help her up." And struggling against them, poor Margery was dragged along, and being forced up into the trooper's outstretched arms, when suddenly a furious galloping was heard, and Slasher rode up with angry looks.

"How now, sirrahs!" he demanded, reining up, "is it thus ye evil-intreat the King's subjects, and disgrace our standard? Back, sirs, to your places, and unhand the maiden."

The men drew back at the voice of their



commander, apparently very crestfallen; and Slasher, dismounting and offering his arm to Margery, soothed her fears, assuring her that he would himself see her safe to her father's house, and protect her against all further violence.

"Thou must forgive," he said, "the unruly license of these rude soldiers; they do not often see such beauty as thine, and it maketh them mad."

Margery was still so agitated that she dared not withdraw her arm, for fear of dropping; yet the tone of her new protector was even more distasteful than that of his rougher associates.

"Surely, sir," she replied, "the King's soldiers might be taught by their officers that the maidens of England should not be treated thus. Our men are better ordered; and are, therefore, better loved by the poor."

"Nay, fair maiden, I will not dispute with thee the merits of Roundhead and Cavalier. Happy am I that I have had the good

fortune to be thy protector, and do my duty, at least, as a Cavalier. But thou talkest of the love of the poor for thy soldiers. Surely," he said, with his most winning glance of admiration, "thou claimest no part with the common people: thy face bespeaks it not."

"Truly, sir," replied Margery, "I am but a child of the people; my father is nought but a humble tradesman, and I wish not to be thought otherwise. But I am now close to my father's house; I thank thee, sir, for thy care of my safety, and bid thee farewell."

"Farewell, sweet maiden," said the Captain, "since we must part;" and raising her hand to his lips, he made her one of his most courtly bows, and with a melancholy air, turned and mounted his horse. He did not, however, depart till he had watched her home, and seen what house she entered.

"Now," thought he to himself, "I have produced an impression, and I will follow it up."

Days passed on, and the Roundheads did not make their appearance before Willingham Hall; and Slasher, beginning to think it had been altogether a false alarm, divided his time pretty equally between the comforts of Sir John's hospitable mansion, and his visits to Reading in pursuance of his designs upon Margery. He had under some pretext or other contrived to insinuate himself into the acquaintance and good graces of Manasses—whose good graces were indeed not difficult to attain by any one who would purchase largely and liberally at his shop; and few days passed without the Captain coming thither, accompanied by a few of his men, to purchase comforts out of the store of Manasses for his troop; for, as he said, "Friend Manasses, there is not a shop like thine all the country round for the things that thou sellest; and I ever give my men of the best." And Manasses took care that if his goods were of the best, the price paid for them by his open-handed Royalist

customer should also be of the very best. Still the Captain, though often invited in by the worthy dealer to partake of rest and refreshment, made no way with the fair Margery, who treated him ever respectfully, but kept him at an immeasurable distance; misunderstanding all his fine speeches, and showing not the least sensibility to his admiring looks.

At last the Captain became impatient.

“What! the foul fiend!” would he say to himself. “Am I, who have basked in the sunshine of fair ladies’ eyes in the Courts of France and Germany, am I to be thus dallied with by a mere country maiden, the daughter of a vendor of figs and French plums?” His pride was piqued, and he determined to carry the affair by a *coup de main*, if long and close siege were so unavailing.

The Captain had either not seen or not noticed in his journeyings to and from Reading, that a beggarly-looking old man on a

sorry horse was frequently in his rear, at a distance of a mile or two at times, at others, close upon him, but always loitering about the road when he entered, and when he left the grocer's house. Such, however, had been the espionage to which he had been subjected; and the old man, by some secret means of information, always seemed to know when Captain Slasher left Willingham for Reading, and always accompanied him at a respectful distance.

In the mean time the Parliamentary corps, though it did not approach Willingham Hall, had not been as idle as it was supposed to be. It lay within a few miles of it, quartered at a small village; where apparently it had nothing to do, and did nothing but enjoy itself: Cornet Joyce spent the greater part of his time in his own room; the soldiers—the greater part of them at least—were left pretty much to themselves; and except the morning and evening muster, and the periodical visit of their officer to see

that the arms and horses were in proper condition, they had no duty to do.

The Serjeant, Elijah, and some half-dozen of the troopers were often away for days together, and none of the soldiers knew, or indeed asked, where; though, when they returned, the Serjeant was sent for by the Cornet, and had long interviews with him in his room.

At length one evening the Cornet issued from his quarters late, and the trumpets rung out the call to horse: out came the troopers, one by one, from their different quarters, wondering what was in the wind; and as they arrived at the rendezvous, each took his place, till the whole detachment was in order. The Cornet then divided them into two corps: of one, the larger body, he took the lead himself; the other, a body of a score of men, he placed under the Serjeant's command; and, after his officer had spoken a few words to him, the Serjeant gave the word to march, and

set off at a round trot in the direction of Reading.

Joyce himself took the opposite direction at a slow walk, towards Willingham, bending his course towards the park at its furthest extremity from the house; and commanding his men to remain perfectly silent, and to hold their scabbards in their hands to avoid any clatter of arms. Thus they proceeded till they came within the park, when he ordered the men to separate into parties of two and three, and stand under the shadow of the trees, motionless and silent: and thus they remained for many hours.

It was past midnight: the men remained —so perfect was the discipline of that terrible Cromwellian army — still and silent as death. Ever and anon Joyce, who had dismounted, would silently and cautiously creep to the edge of the wood, and looking round over the expanse of country, watch as if for some expected party. But



none appearing, he would return to his post under the shadow of an old tree, and there remain again motionless. At length, a dull distant sound of horses' feet fell upon his ear: he listened.

"It is they," he said; and again going forth to the edge of the wood, he beheld his little party that he had despatched some few hours before, slowly advancing. Elijah was at their head, his grim countenance looking grimmer than usual, and flushed as with recent excitement. In the rear, between two troopers with their swords drawn, uncovered and disarmed, rode Captain Slasher, pale, and with a jaded and anxious look.

"Is it done?" whispered the Cornet, as the Serjeant advanced.

"Yea, truly," replied the Serjeant: "we have smitten them hip and thigh, and saved the damsel; and behold, the man is here."

He then stepped apart with his commander, and had a short and hurried conference with him. When they returned, the Cornet

ordered the prisoner to be brought forward, in a tone in which it was difficult to say whether horror or sternness predominated; and Captain Slasher's horse was led forward by the two troopers, for he was scarcely able himself to guide him.

"Captain Slasher," said the Cornet, addressing him, "you have been taken prisoner in a foul attempt unworthy a soldier; your doom by the laws of war would be death: is it not so?"

"Nay, murder me not in cold blood," gasped the Captain.

"Didst *thou* shew any mercy, dishonoured soldier, to that old and unarmed man, when he sought but to save his daughter? But come, I have no time to bandy reproaches with thee. Sir, thou knowest the secret defences of this place, and the ways into it. I would spare English blood; and the Lord, I verily believe, hath delivered thee into my hands as an instrument for that end. Thou mayest choose; guide us in there in

silence and safety and thy wretched life shall be spared: if thou dost refuse, or dost betray us, I myself will shatter thy head even as a potsherd. I give thee five minutes to decide."

The Captain groaned aloud: once or twice his eyes flashed with something like the glow of courage, as though death would be preferable to dishonour; but then he turned them on the stern Cornet, who held his pistol cocked; and the men tightened their grasp upon his arm; and he looked in vain for a faint glimmer of mercy in the cold fierce eye of the officer, his coward heart sank within him, and he preferred dishonour to death.

"I will shew thee the way," he said at last in a hollow voice; "but thou swearest to save my life, and thou must save me from my own men: thou wilt swear to protect me?"

"I swear not," was the answer of the Puritan officer; "but I give thee the word

of a soldier, that thou shalt be spared and protected. Lead the way, and beware thou art not false ; if thou dost but attempt escape, or to give an alarm, thou hast that moment seen the last of life."

So saying, he took the head of his troop, and placing Slasher, with the two men who guarded him by his side, silently they marched on. Through various winding paths he led them, till at length they emerged from beneath a clump of trees in the small courtyard behind the kitchens.

"Now," said Slasher, "proceed to that door (pointing to the door of an out-house); it is but slightly fastened: enter that door, and it leads through the kitchens into the great hall: enter the hall and the house is yours."

"What force is there in the house?" asked the Cornet.

"Not ten armed men; and they are scattered."

"Where are thy men?"



The Captain did not immediately answer.

"Dost thou go back from thy word?" asked Joyce, raising the fatal pistol.

"No, no!" cried Slasher in an agony of fear: "but give me time, give me time."

"There is none to spare, sir. Where are your men?"

"In the stables."

"All in the stables?"

"All, all!" replied the unhappy man, as he wrung his hands in anguish, at being driven to this last act of baseness and treachery.

The rest of the operations were simple and easy. The Cornet placed a guard over the doors of the stables, and himself proceeded into the house. The servants were taken by surprise in their beds, and overpowered in an instant: the Cornet himself proceeded to the Knight's chamber with a few men, and, laying his hand upon his shoulder, awoke him to find himself helplessly a prisoner. The troopers were caught

in a trap; shut up, under a guard, without the chance of using their arms: and they were obliged to surrender. In a quarter of an hour Willingham House was in the possession of Joyce and his force, without a shot having been fired, or a drop of blood shed.

We must now hark back upon Captain Slasher's movements, in order to explain how it was that he came to grief in the manner just described.

The shrewd reader will have guessed that the old man with the dilapidated horse who hung about the Captain, was Elijah Gideon; who, having his suspicions of the man, and being desirous of extending the shield of his protection over Margery, whom he still loved with all the steadiness of his firm character, had at first watched Slasher that he might defeat his base designs against Margery. Elijah having, in order to obtain leave of absence for this purpose, found it necessary to divulge to his officer his motives and his

tie to Margery, it occurred to the somewhat politic mind of Joyce, that the service of the fair Margery might be made subservient to that of the State. Hence he had many conferences with Elijah, with a view to carry into effect a plan for at once defeating the Captain's siege of Margery, and obtaining possession of his person. Joyce calculated, from the account given to him of Slasher's character, that, if taken, a due amount of intimidation would enable him to avail himself of the Captain's love of life, to compel him to betray the fortress he was bound to defend. Thus Joyce would obtain possession of it without loss of any of his own men, or any destruction of either life or property; which he knew would be a service after his General's own heart: for it is well known that Cromwell, though stern and resolute, and though never relinquishing what he deemed a necessary enterprise because it involved loss of life, yet was neither cruel nor blood-thirsty; and,

so that he took a place, he would always rather take it without than with loss of life.

On the day that we have described, Elijah had discovered that Slasher intended to proceed with a body of men to Reading, there to attack the house of old Manasses, and take forcible possession of Margery; since he could not obtain her by fair means. Hence Elijah was despatched with a score of troopers to countermine him, and with orders to bring Slasher, dead or alive, to Joyce; an order which Elijah determined to execute to the very letter. He arrived at the village where Manasses dwelt, just in time. Slasher had surrounded the house, and had caused Margery to be dragged forth, in spite of the execrations and resistance of the villagers.

Elijah arrived with his troop at full gallop just in time to see old Manasses rushing out of his house unarmed, maddened with grief and rage, and, trying to



rescue his daughter, cut down and mortally wounded by the brutal Slasher. Furious at the sight, and in the highest state of excitement with the rapidity of his march, Elijah shouted out to his men to charge; and they rushed pell mell on the King's troops, who, astonished, taken by surprise, and ill-commanded (for the sight of the infuriated Gideon had taken away all Captain Slasher's courage), were fairly ridden down and cut to pieces almost in an instant: breaking and flying without order, they left Slasher at the mercy of his enemy.

Never had Gideon required so much self-control as when Slasher stood before him, paralysed with the sudden attack: his own arm uplifted, with his ponderous broadsword high in the air, one blow of which would have cleft the skull of the murderous villain in twain. But the sense of duty, the habit of stern discipline, restrained his vengeance; and instead of cutting him down, he seized him by the arm and, calling upon him to sur-

render, handed him over to two of his men, with orders to disarm him immediately and keep strict guard over him. Then, springing from his horse, Gideon sought the bereaved Margery, and speaking such comfort to her as the shortness of his time permitted, and seeing her in safe charge of some of the neighbours, he returned to his troop and set forward for Willingham in the order we have described.

Poor Margery! bitter were her tears for the death of her father. She knew him to be a hard and a griping man: she knew that he was but little beloved in general; but to her he had always been kind and tender; for her it was, she knew, that he griped and hoarded, and hoarded and grasped; and though she would far better have liked that he should enjoy in peace what he had already heaped up, yet the thought that it was out of love for her, in a great measure, that he thus wore out his life in labour and mean grasping at wealth, came back

upon her heart with a current of sad feeling. Even his death was for her; and she wept bitterly and would not be comforted.

Then the noble, the enduring love of Elijah—who, indeed, had faithfully kept his promise of watching over her as a brother—rose up to her view, and she bethought herself how little she deserved such love from one whom she had thrown from her. Alas! poor girl, her trial was stern and severe, but it chastened her spirit; and when, after a few days of the first grief, her mind began to recover a little calm, she arose a sadder but a better woman. Her dream of romance was gone: the spell had been broken by the rude hand of real suffering and grief; and her heart softened towards the brave and faithful soldier who, out of his love for her, had rescued her from dishonour, and would have saved her father from death, if he could.

## CHAPTER XVII.

## THE WOOING OF ELIJAH.

THE astonishment and indignation of Sir John Willingham when he found himself a prisoner in the hands of the Parliamentary soldiers, without having had even the chance of striking a blow, were terrible. Joyce had left him under a guard, while he himself went to superintend the disarming of Slasher's troop, and the evacuation of the house. The Knight strode up and down his room, storming and swearing till he was fairly exhausted, and sank down on his couch in

a state of utter prostration. What could it mean? How could it have happened? What had the soldiers been about, that the enemy should have got in in such an unaccountable manner? He could not make it out, and at last did what he would have been wise to do at first, without putting himself in a passion; he gave it up, till he should see Slasher, or the commanding officer of the captors. At length Cornet Joyce returned, and bowing courteously to the old man, for whom he could not but feel sympathy, opened the negociation.

“Sir John Willingham,” he said, “I grieve to say that you must consider yourself my prisoner. Yet my orders are not to disturb you in the possession of your house and estate: but upon conditions.”

“Oh, of course!” returned the Knight, with some irritation: “upon conditions, of course! Your Parliament and your generals never wish to disturb peaceful men, but upon conditions. Upon condition, I suppose, that I

give up my all to the Parliament. Some such mercy as that I expect at your hands, as all loyal subjects must."

"Not quite so bad, Sir John; not quite so much as that. A fine, no doubt, will be inflicted: but that rests not with me. My orders are only to exact conditions for the future safety of the State—that Sir John Willingham's house shall not be made a fortress for the King's troops. I am to require that you give your word, as a Knight and a gentleman, not further to harbour the King's troops, or to defend the place against the army of the Parliament; and I am to leave a guard of my people here, whom you will undertake to quarter and provision: that is all. If you accede to those terms, I am to withdraw, and leave you further unmolested."

"Ay," retorted the Knight bitterly; "I expected some such mercy. I am, forsooth, to shut my door against my kinsfolk and brothers-in-arms, and to maintain a

guard over myself: to be a prisoner in my own house."

"Such are my orders, Sir John. I cannot disobey them, or vary the terms: and methinks they are light enough. Many a mansion has been sacked for less than thou hast done against the State."

"The State, sir! the King is the State, and not your Parliament; which is but the tool of your General. But I must needs submit, seeing that I have no force wherewithal to resist. But how chanced this, I pray you tell me? I have not heard a shot, or a blow of a sword: you stole upon us in the night, like thieves in the dark (I pray you forgive me.)"

"You were betrayed, Sir John, by your own people. I should not have expected so easy a victory had Sir John Willingham met us sword in hand."

The old Knight was a little mollified by the tribute to his well-known prowess, and replied somewhat more calmly,

“Faith! and you would not, I believe, Sir Cornet: this hand is old, but it can still wield a broadsword, and fire a pistol; and had I met thee in the *mêlée*, thou shouldst not have come in, except over this old and worn out body. But thou saidst betrayed—betrayed by whom? There is not a man of the Willingham people who would not have perilled life for our Royal master.”

“I said not by a Willingham, nor a Willingham man. We know you and yours of old, Sir John, for stout and bitter malignants, and would not have wasted time to corrupt any of your own people. Thou wast betrayed even by the commander of thy garrison.”

“Slasher! Slasher betray the King’s cause! Now, God help us, indeed, when gentlemen and King’s officers turn traitors. Nay, say it is not so—say thou dost but trifle with an old man; even if it be for thy sport: though it be bitter and unmanly sport so to jest.”

“I jest not, Sir John Willingham,” replied



the Cornet gravely;" and he narrated to him the circumstances which we have already detailed.

"The villain! the base cowardly villain!" exclaimed the old Knight. "Take him away, take him away, I beseech you. Let not the dastardly hound darken these doors an hour longer. Oh, my God! that a soldier of the King should be coward as well as traitor! It is too much." And the old man fairly groaned with anguish.

Joyce was touched; for even party spirit, bitter as it was in those unhappy wars, could not eradicate from the breasts of Englishmen the reverence for misfortune and brave constancy in a foe.

"Sir," he said, "I fear I am going somewhat beyond my commission; but I think I may venture to say that thy son is not included in the ban put upon thy house. Thou mayest receive him alone. Dost thou accept the terms so altered?"

"I must," replied the Knight. "I do,

and I pledge my word. Dost thou demand my sword?" and taking it by the point, he offered the hilt to Joyce.

"Nay, sir," replied Joyce, returning it, "the word of Sir John Willingham is enough: take back thy sword. We seek not to dishonour brave men, though they be our foes. And now, Sir John, this matter being settled, I will crave that some refreshment be given to my men, who have been on guard in the cold in thy park all night; and I will then withdraw."

"Truly," said the Knight, "they shall have of the best; and for thee, Sir Cornet, I will crave thy partaking of our morning meal with myself. Thy duty has been a painful one; but thou hast discharged it as a soldier and a gentleman should. Thou wilt not refuse to break bread with Sir John Willingham?"

"Nay, Sir John, I shall esteem it an honour to be the guest of so noble a Knight. Think not that we bear enmity to thy order, though

we war against it. Many of it are amongst our friends; and they are not of the least brave."

The breakfast was served at the early hour of six in the morning. Breakfasts in those days did not consist of coffee and chocolate and homœopathic slices of toast, with, perhaps, for a *very* hungry man, a pullet's egg. In those days, also, the King's guards did not exist upon soda-water and champagne, and sundry sweet cakes. Men had rougher lives and stronger stomachs than we have now, and the Elizabethan style had not yet given way at breakfast, to the almost ethereal style of the present day. Breakfast, therefore, among country gentlemen, was, in fact, a potent and majestic dinner: cold meats; game in pasties, and in various other cooked forms; ale that would stagger a footman, or even a policeman, of this day, and choice wines: in fact, a superb *déjeuner à la fourchette*. I am not sure that we have been wise in our generation in departing from

that generous matutinal diet, and substituting for it the namby-pambyism, fragrant though it may be, of the Arabian berry, and supplying the stomach with nothing more than bread exhausted by the process of toasting, as the pabulum on which the brain has to do its seven or eight hours' ante-prandial work.

It is said that such diet as our forefathers breakfasted on would be too heavy for our modern brain-work, and that our brains would be too clouded after such meals for our very intellectual existence. But I have yet to learn that the work that is done by the 100,000 gentlemen, who in London cast up accounts, or write long prosy letters about bales of goods, or write novels, or do any other of the thousand and one very intellectual works of this day, have much more strain upon their brains than had such men as Lord Bacon, or Lord Burleigh, or Oliver Cromwell; and yet these men fed upon beef and ale and wines for

---

breakfast, and they have left *some little reputation* for intellect and work behind them. However, let that pass as a digression, in which a novelist must now and then indulge, just to refresh himself from the monotony of his story.

Of the massive and majestic kind, at any rate, was the breakfast to which Cornet Joyce, with the appetite of a young soldier who had been out in the cold air all night, sat down; and for some time he devoted, like a good Puritan as he was, his whole energies to the business in hand. A modern midshipman, the only relic that we have of digestive capability, could not have done better. But when, at length, leisure from the exercise of his jaws left him at liberty to observe the massive silver goblets and salvers, and the fine old table of polished and carved oak on which his breakfast had been served—the gorgeous tapestries of the room in which they sat, the old pictures, and the costly things of all kinds with

which such mansions were furnished — Cornet Joyce, who, though a gentleman in feeling, was a plebeian by birth and had never seen anything so sumptuous and elegant, could not help a passing thought, which, had it shaped itself in words, would have been something akin to the ejaculation of Blucher, when, in riding through the streets of London, he exclaimed, “Mein Gott, what a city for to sack !”

The Cornet was, however, too much of a gentleman to say that, and he contented himself with craving leave to return thanks (he had forgotten, by-the-bye, to ask a blessing before beginning); which having done, at no very unreasonable length, he thanked his host for his courtesy, and withdrew ; leaving a guard of twenty men under the command of Serjeant Elijah Gideon.

The Serjeant had been expressly selected for this duty at the recommendation and instance of Colonel Frankland, in whose troop he served ; and who, knowing the man and his

qualities well, felt sure, that though he would do his duty, he would do it mercifully and gently; and that in him Sir John Willingham and his own dear Rachel would find a protector rather than an insolent gaoler.

Elijah was not long at Willingham without justifying the expectations of his Colonel: he ruled his little troop with a strong hand, and while he rigidly adhered to his duty of posting sentinels so as to command all access to the place, and otherwise enforcing his guard, he suffered no license, no overbearing insolence either towards Sir John or his domestics: indeed, but that he knew he was under an enemy's guard, Sir John and his household might have supposed they had merely a friendly company of soldiers quartered upon them.

Elijah was not long, either, in winning the good graces of Rachel's waiting-maid; or as they still called it her tire-woman. Not that he flirted with her: Elijah was too good a Puritan to do that, even if he had

not been in love; but being in love, he was doubly armed—armed with his panoply of Puritanic grimness and with his breast-plate of love for another woman; and no true-hearted man in love ever flirts. But his very love for Margery made him gentle and considerate to every woman, and Mistress Lisbet Jansen found the rough-looking Sergeant so accommodating, so ready to do for her any little task requiring the aid of man and horse; and withal so able to talk well, in spite of his acquired snuffle (which he often indeed forgot when off duty), that she pronounced him a jewel of a Roundhead, and spoke of him very approvingly to her young mistress.

Elijah was frequently away with a few men for a day or two, and we need hardly say that, when this did occur, his horse's head was turned towards Reading. Elijah found a glad reception at the house that was once the unfortunate Manasses'. Margery rejoiced to see him, and made no at-



tempt to conceal that his presence was a support and a comfort to her. The excellent Serjeant, with a tact which may be found as well in a rough trooper as in a polished gentleman, never spoke on the subject of his seeking her hand: he talked with her of her father and of her own plans; of the vicissitudes of his service; of anything and everything that came within his range of discourse, except of love: of that he never breathed a word. He called her his sister, and spoke like an affectionate brother; and she began to lean upon him as her natural protector: he was, indeed, her only protector, now that her father was gone.

Whether he really did pay more attention to his toilet and his language than he had used to do, I cannot say with any degree of certainty; but this I can assert as positive, that Margery began to think he was not so rough or so coarse in manner and language as she had used to think him; and when she looked at his kind though stern

face—for he could smile, and very sweetly for a Puritan—she really thought it was a face she could love to look at again and again, whenever she was in trouble; and then when Elijah was in the house, she felt so safe: that tall muscular form, that strong hand which grasped the heavy broadsword as a toy (and she had seen it whirl over his head as though it had been a slight wand),—she looked at them, and she thought that while he was with her, an army could not hurt her.

“*Ne nous pressons pas, cela marche, cela marche!*” as the French utopians say; and Elijah may yet efface the image that lay so long like a weight upon the heart of little Margery, stifling its better and more legitimate aspirations.

“My sister,” said Elijah to her one evening, when after a long visit, he was preparing to depart; “I would I could see thee under some safe guardianship. In this, thy father’s house, thou art alone, and un-

protected; and when I am called back to the army, and march I know not whither, there will be none to protect thee. I would thou couldst find some house of mark, where thou mightst be safe when thy brother is taken from thee."

"I had thought of this, Elijah," she replied; "but I know of no such house where I could find refuge. My father, as thou knowest, went abroad but little, and consorted only with our people; and I know of none, save the Rev. Ebenezer Holdfast, who could give me shelter: and thou knowest, my brother, that though a godly man, he loveth not any charge upon his care."

"No," said Elijah, with a smile very like a grin. "The reverend man, I know, will give thee texts enough for a troop; but his tongue is freer than his hand. But I have bethought me: Mistress Jansen hath told me that the Lady Rachel doth seek even now such a damsel as thee; she is lonely, and

would fain have some maiden of thy degree in her service. She is a gentle and a comely maiden, and is beloved by all: wouldst thou like that, my Margery?"

"Thou art, indeed, a brother to me," said Margery softly.

"Ah! would that I might call thee by a yet sweeter name," replied Gideon.

"Thou mayest an' thou wilt," answered Margery, in a voice so low that none but a lover would have heard it.

"Now, blessed be God!" exclaimed Elijah; and forgetting that he had his cuirass on, he folded his arms round her, and strained her to his iron-covered breast, till she almost cried out with pain; but she bore it meekly as a Christian woman, and did not seek to remove herself from the embrace of her brother Gideon.

"Margery," he said, when his emotion had a little subsided, "my own loved Margery, this is more than I had yet hoped: I could have waited for thy heart long—

long years ; it is, indeed, sweet to win thee sooner than I had hoped."

"I knew thee not, dear Elijah," was the reply ; "I knew not myself, till that day when thou didst save me from that fearful man ; then I knew how thou lovedst me, and from that hour I have learned to love thee."

Elijah was rather late at Willingham that evening, and could not broach his proposal to Mistress Jansen till the next day. But the next day he did so ; and Mistress Jansen consulted Rachel, and the result was that a few days afterwards, the stout Serjeant brought with him from Reading the pretty Margery, who was thenceforth installed in Rachel's household, as what we should now call her companion : and Serjeant Gideon had no longer such continual calls of military business to Reading.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

## THE KING'S FLIGHT.

WHILE General Cromwell had been in negociation with the King for an amicable settlement of the disputes between the Commons and the Sovereign, he had promised the King that, if any events should occur which would place his life in danger, he would communicate it to him, so as to give him the opportunity of saving himself.

In this Cromwell was probably governed by a double motive. He was not, as we have said, and as history justifies us in say-

ing, blood-thirsty. He did not personally desire the death of the King: he did desire the termination of the Civil War in a way that should attain the objects for which it had been commenced,—the reduction of the arbitrary power of the Sovereign, and the restriction of it within just and fixed limits; and he did desire the termination of it on terms which should place himself in a position, for which the whole events of the war had justified him in considering himself as fitted and called,—that of a man holding high place and rule in the State.

Gladly, no doubt, would he have accepted, if the King had been amenable to reason, of a compromise which would have settled the Government on such a footing; and happy would it have been for England, if the King had been well advised enough to have acceded to such terms. But if events came to such a crisis that the King's life was threatened, then Cromwell would have preferred his escaping and withdrawing himself

from the country, to his taking the course which Charles did; because, as I have said, he desired rather the King's absence than his life: and if the King had withdrawn and virtually abdicated, then Cromwell saw that he himself, and he alone, must rule; and that, too, freed of having the King's blood on his head.

Cromwell was an excellent judge of character in general: he could discern talent, and he could detect knavery; but foolishness he did not understand: and when he thus dealt with the King, he forgot, or did not see, what a Royal fool he was dealing with.

In sending word to Charles to apprise him of his danger, — to apprise him, that as he could no longer trust him, he must yield to the claims of the army and the republicans, who were for having the King tried for treason to the State—it did not enter Cromwell's head that his Royal captive could be so blind as not to see that such



a trial could have but one issue; and so foolish as not to avail himself of the hint to remove himself from England and so from further danger. But thus misunderstanding Charles, Cromwell did send a letter to Colonel Frankland; to whose guard, as one of the most moderate and mild and gentleman-like of the Parliamentary officers, he had committed the charge of the King.

The letter was a model of what is supposed, by some historians, to be a craft peculiar to Cromwell; but which is, in fact, no more than the craft common to all who have to deal in matters diplomatical. It informed the Colonel that the Parliament was bent upon some measures that might end in the trial of the King; it lamented the strifes that tore the unhappy kingdom; it expressed deep anxiety that so grievous a matter as the King's trial might be prevented; and then it proceeded thus:—

“I pray God that the King may be enabled to escape from this great evil; but

yet I see not how that should come to pass, unless he knoweth of the dangers with which he is surrounded; nor how, in the place to which it hath pleased the Lord to call me, I can, without failing to the Parliament, assist the King. If, indeed, some Christian soul with a tender conscience should tell the King of his danger; truly, though I would be wroth with him for neglecting his duty to the Commonwealth; yet could I find it in my heart to say that, if I were not what I am, I must yield, yea, that I must, out of the softness of my heart, advise this poor King."

There was much more of the same sort; out of which Frankland, who knew both the feelings and the style of his General, gathered, that if he laid the letter before the King, he might indeed, and probably would, receive a severe *public* rebuke from the General; but that if he did not, the General would not forgive him. He waited, therefore, on the unfortunate Charles, and,

without a word of comment, placed the General's letter in his hands.

The King read it attentively, and returning it with a sad smile, observed that it was a little obscure.

"Sir," said the Colonel, "it is obscure, so far as my instructions are concerned; but methinks it speaketh plainly enough of danger to your Majesty."

"True," rejoined Charles. "I see he talks of the Parliament bringing me to trial; but they dare not: they cannot dare to attempt such a mockery as to try the King!"

"Sir," replied Frankland, "trust not to that: the Parliament will dare anything. I may not, sir, say more, without wrong to my General and my friends; but your Majesty sees how earnest General Cromwell is."

"What wouldst thou have me do, Colonel Frankland? Thou art a Roundhead soldier, and must do thy duty; but *thou* dost not hate the King: tell me, what dost thou advise?"

“Fly, sire; fly this country! Dost not your Majesty see that there is here no safety for you? It is only in flight that it can be found: it is to that that the General’s letter points.”

The King mused.

“I will think on it,” he said. “They cannot, they will not dare—but I will think upon ‘it.’”

The King had resolved in his heart on flight from Hampton Court from the moment he had read Cromwell’s letter; and, perchance, if the Colonel had not so urged him to fly the country, and if he had not so pointedly called his attention to that being the desire of Cromwell, perchance, I say, the King would have so determined; and England might have been spared the tragedy which, whether it was avoidable or not, all foreign nations, and most native historians, esteem a blot upon our history. But the pride and the obstinacy of his race were aroused, the moment a course of con-

duct seemed *dictated* to Charles. Cromwell *desired* him to fly; therefore he would not fly. His self-will—that species of self-will which was always the ruling foible of the Stewarts, which is at this day to be seen in many who have the blood of the Stewarts in their veins—a self-will which delights not so much in enforcing one's own plans, as in thwarting those of others; a sort of negative arbitrariness; an intense hatred of being guided, rather than a disposition or a capacity to guide others;—his self-will was stirred up, and he secretly resolved to fly from Hampton Court, but *not to fly the country*.

It was this sort of passive arbitrariness which was the curse and the ruin of the house of Stewart. The Stewarts were not ambitious; they were not personally despotic; that is, they had little initiative despotism. They did not devise great plans, and enforce them with a stern will; but they could not tolerate will in any but themselves. It was

not so much to have their *own* will, as to let *no one else* have a will, that was their ruling passion. Neither of the Charles' ever originated any great idea, or great movement; neither of them ever attempted to govern much, or to impress his own mind and his own will on the nation. What they did was to wait till the nation had shown a will, and then to thwart it: resenting it as a dictation to *their will*.

This unhappy quality of mind, this passive tyranny—which has the disadvantage of stirring up animosity, without the advantage of ruling it—was strong in the mind of Charles I. He carried it into his public conduct; he carried it into those acts of his life, on which even his own personal safety depended; and every step of his unhappy career, from the breaking out of the Civil War, is marked with it. In the present instance, the commonest sense—not to say the commonest wisdom—would have satisfied any man not blinded by such a

sort of self-will, that the King had but two courses open,—to rally an army, and reconquer his crown, or die in the attempt; or to leave the country while he still might: that to let the opportunity given to him by Cromwell—who yet could and would so far protect him—pass by, was to compel Cromwell to abandon him to his fate. And yet, under the influence of that obstinate self-will, which, as I have observed, never showed itself in any higher way than in thwarting the will of others, the King rejected the counsels of Cromwell, and of common sense, and fled; not to the Continent—not to raise a fresh army—but to the Isle of Wight! into the very arms of Colonel Hammond, an officer of the Parliament, who could not have protected him if he would, and probably would not if he could.

On that same night, four horsemen might have been seen riding as hard as man and horse could speed from Thames Ditton across the country, in the direction of the Hamp-

shire coast. Their ride was silent, for the leader seemed too absorbed with anxiety for conversation; and the three other horsemen, who followed at such a distance as to be able to join him in an instant, yet not to press upon his privacy, seemed to mould their conduct on that of their chief. Thus onward they sped, nor drew bit till they reached a little village about half-way between Hampton Court and the coast. There the leader, arresting his course, turned round, and addressing his companions, said in gentle tones,

“Ye must be weary, gentlemen, as I am. We will rest awhile here, and refresh ourselves before we pursue our journey.”

The younger of the party hastily dismounted, and, running up to his leader, respectfully took the bridle of his horse, and offered his aid for him to dismount.

“Nay, Hubert,” said the fugitive, “not here these tokens of respect: remember, I am your chief, but nothing more.”



“Not so, sir,” replied the young man: “I will not forget your safety; but hinder me not from remembering also whose safety it is that we are to care for. Your Majesty has had enough of Roundhead attendants, and I would fain that you should again enjoy the attendance of a loyal subject.”

“Even as thou wilt, then, Hubert,” said the King, leaning on his shoulder as he dismounted: “it is indeed long since I have pressed the shoulder of a loyal gentleman, and the change is pleasant.”

The other two of the King’s attendants in the meantime busied themselves in obtaining, at the little hostelry where they had stopped, refreshment for their party and their horses. And it was truly a sad sight, and one that might have touched a heart of stone, to see the Monarch of these kingdoms thus hunted through his dominions like a malefactor; condemned to snatch food where he might, and depending, even for the little attendance that he

had, upon the affection of a few of his faithful servants.

The meal was hasty, and with as little of ceremony as the King's followers could bring themselves to shew, lest they should compromise the safety of their Royal master; and away again to horse; and away again over the country, riding for life and death, till they reached, late in the evening, Titchfield House, the mansion of Lord Southampton. There the King knew that he should find one more faithful friend, who would shelter his Sovereign with such entertainment and such force as he might command. Still some precautions were requisite even here; as in those times no man could say, from day to day, who might be his guest—willingly or unwillingly—or what might be, from day to day, the power of any man to protect his dearest friend.

Hubert, therefore, preceded the party to reconnoitre the state of Titchfield House and

its master. On entering, and finding that Lord Southampton was within, he sent up his name, and was forthwith ushered into the noble owner's private room—study, as we should now call it.

“Welcome, thrice welcome, Master of Willingham,” said his Lordship, rising as he entered; “though I fear, by thy being here, there is no good news from the army: thou wouldst not have been away from it if there was work to be done for the King.”

“No, my Lord, I trust not: I have, indeed, no good news. But hast thou the means of sheltering three gentlemen of our friends, who are in sore strait?”

“Not much means, I fear, of protecting them: shelter, and all that Titchfield House contains, they shall have for their comfort, if they be true men and the King's friends; and none others, I know, would be heralded by Hubert of Willingham.”

“It is the King, my Lord, who craves your hospitality.”

"The King!" exclaimed Lord Southampton. "Alas! Then, is it come to this, that the King is driven to seek safety in flight?"

"Even so, my Lord Southampton," replied Hubert. "Hast thou not heard that the army of the Parliament seek his life, and, but for a friendly hint—which, to give the devil his due, was, I cannot but think, meant by General Cromwell—his Majesty would, ere this, have been in the hands of his mortal enemies."

"Thou shalt tell me more presently, Hubert Willingham," replied his Lordship; "haste we now to receive the King." And descending to the courtyard, bare-headed, Lord Southampton approached Charles, and, bending the knee, kissed his hand in respectful silence; then aiding the King to dismount, he ushered him into the house and conducted him to an apartment, small, but elegantly furnished, with a still smaller dressing closet opening out of it.

“Sir,” he said, “I have not offered your Majesty the best, but the most retired and safe apartment in my house: would that your Majesty were here in a state in which I might more consult your comfort than your safety.”

“You have done the kindest thing, my friend,” said Charles. “The King, alas! must be content to find shelter; and his best friends are those who think more of his safety than his dignity: but, my Lord, I fear I endanger yours.”

“He were no true noble of your Majesty, who would think of his own safety, sir, when your’s is in peril: think not of *my* safety. The kings of England made me what I am; and with my life will I defend the King. But now, with your Majesty’s permission, I will retire and provide for the entertainment of your followers.”

“Say my *friends*, Lord Southampton: I have lived to distinguish between followers of the King, and friends of Charles Stewart;

and among the latter I reckon thee and the gentlemen who are with me."

Bitter indeed were the reflections of Charles when left alone. His army dispersed; the enemy in possession of London, and of nearly every stronghold in the kingdom; himself a fugitive, dependent even for his very daily bread on the hospitality of the nobles and gentry who adhered to him! And with what prospect? The protection of the Governor of the Isle of Wight, himself a Parliamentary officer, and whose only tie to him was near relationship to one of the King's chaplains!

While the flight lasted, the excitement of the hurried ride, the anxiety to put distance—mere distance—between himself and his enemies, if it had not cheered Charles' spirits and inspired hope, had at least driven away thought. But now that the excitement of violent exercise had made way for the languor of bodily fatigue; now that, alone with his thoughts, he could col-

lect them,—the scales fell from his eyes, and he saw the rottenness of the reed that he was leaning upon. And the King, in the solitude of his chamber, wept and prayed for help, with the outpourings of a broken and contrite heart.

But Charles, tempered and softened, though not instructed by misfortune, had now much more feeling for others than he had evinced in the palmy days of his youthful sovereignty; and, ever anxious not to add to the pain and suffering of his devoted friends, cleared from his countenance all traces of the agony that he had passed through, ere he descended to the reception room. There Lord Southampton had had prepared the repast much needed after Charles' fatiguing and anxious journey; and the cheerful air, and the kind, gentle, condescending tone of the King's conversation, shed over the repast a feeling of peace and enjoyment, that his friends had not ventured to hope for.

When it was concluded, the King reminded

his host that he needed at once the counsel of his friends ; and the future plans of his escape were then discussed.

Now, when it was too late, (alas ! Charles never yielded to man or destiny till it was too late), the King suggested that he should escape to the Continent. But Lord Southampton informed him it was impossible ; the only ship that could have carried him over had sailed that day, but a few hours before the arrival of the Royal party, and no other could be procured for days. Had the King but determined, when he first resolved on flight, to leave the kingdom, and despatched Hubert, hard riding would have brought him to Southampton in time to effect a passage ; but the golden moment had fled : it was too late !

“The hand of God is indeed upon me and my race !” said Charles, sadly ; “but while life is spared, a King may not despair. What next course do you advise, gentlemen ? For me, I would fain throw myself



on the generosity of Colonel Hammond : he will not betray me."

"Sir, I do believe," replied Lord Southampton, "he will not betray your Majesty ; but methinks 't were better that he were sounded, before you risk your person in his keeping. Bethink you : he is an officer of the Parliament, and he may not believe he will do his duty if he seizeth not the opportunity thrown in his way."

"Sir," added Hubert, "with your Majesty's permission, I and Sir John Berkeley will go over to the Island and see the Governor, and we will learn what his views are. He cannot wish to detain *us* ; and if he does, that will be a signal to your Majesty that Carisbrook is no safe place for *you*."

"It must be so, I fear," said the King. "Yet I would fain not thus peril your young life : life and liberty are sweet at your age ; and enough have suffered for me already."

"Say not so, my Liege," replied the

young man. "Life and liberty are indeed sweet; but honour," he continued, with a flashing eye, "is sweeter still: and my father's son would be but a dishonoured gentleman, if he thought of life when honour is at stake."

"Ah, Hubert, Hubert," replied the King, "would I had three hundred such as thee, and a Thermopylæ for the enemy to pass before they could seize my crown, and it might yet be safe."

Finally it was arranged that Hubert and Sir John Berkeley should cross over to the Isle of Wight, and see and sound Colonel Hammond, before they entrusted the King's person within his power.

The result of the negociation is matter of history. Colonel Hammond came over from the Isle of Wight to see and confer with the King. He would pledge himself to nothing, but that he would act as became a man of honour; and the King—what else could he then do?—departed with

him for Carisbrook, where his last days of comparative ease and liberty were to be spent.

## CHAPTER XIX.

## THE COUP D'ETAT.

MEANWHILE London was in a state of furious agitation. The news of the King's flight had reached the metropolis; the citizens were divided, and so was the Parliament. The army alone was all but unanimous, and cried aloud for bringing the King to trial.

The taverns were full, as is usual whenever the English people are excited; and in those days the taverns—for clubs were not—filled the office of the modern club,

where men meet in peaceable times to eat and drink, and ignore each other; and in times of turmoil to eat and drink, and quarrel: the temporary lull occasioned by the virtual cessation of war, allowed men of different politics, to dispute and wrangle fiercely without any serious danger, except that of personal brawls.

The "Three Kings," in Eastcheap, was at that time a celebrated city tavern, of multifarious business. The merchants met there in the morning to take their morning draught, and discuss trade and bargains. The wilder sort of gentry patronised it in the afternoon, when a kind of *table d'hôte* was held, much after the fashion so admirably described in the "Fortunes of Nigel:" a description which I shall not therefore attempt to emulate. In the evening it was more frequented by a lower sort of company, consisting of petty tradesmen and clerks, soldiers, and even artisans; who, with more noise, more tobacco, and rougher

and more potent potations than their betters, still went round in nearly the same circle — eating and drinking, and talking and quarrelling over public events and political principles,—more coarsely, perhaps, and more vehemently, but perhaps, also, with as much sense, or, at any rate, with as little nonsense.

Here, on the evening when the news of the King's flight reached London, was assembled a large and heterogeneous company — some in parties at separate tables, discussing hot suppers and copious draughts of ale; some collected round a long table, extending nearly the whole length of the room, and which was used in the afternoon for the *table d'hôte* dinner, and in the evening for the general mass of drinking and smoking guests.

Round this table were collected some fifty or sixty people, nearly all talking at once, and most of them with the heat that politics — stimulated by wine and ale — produce

usually in the breasts of most men, and particularly of Englishmen. The host sat at the upper end, and endeavoured for a while to keep some sort of order, for the credit of his house; but it was a difficult matter, and he gave it up, despairingly, hoping that bloodshed at any rate might be avoided.

In the mean time men and things were violently discussed. A warm dispute had been maintained for some time between two of the guests; one, a citizen apparently of some consideration, if the richness of his dress and the attention paid to his remarks were evidences of it; and the other apparently an officer, though the relics of his uniform, once obviously gay but now in what we should term a seedy state, scarcely sufficed to indicate to what party he had belonged. Round these two had gathered a circle, which had gradually subsided from talkers to listeners, while the two disputants, like ancient gladiators, or modern pugilists, fought out their fight.

"Ye are a pretty set," said the soldier, "to talk of your liberties as ye do, as if ye never had any liberties till now; or as if there was none but the King who had ever trampled upon your liberties! Why, gadzooks! the Lord General, as ye call him, gives your liberties more kicks in a day, than King Charles ever did in a twelve-month."

"Well done!" called out several Royalist voices. "Go it, Captain, give it him; the King has the best of it."

"If he hath the best of it here," retorted the citizen, "he hath had much the worst of it in the open field; and, I reckon, has worse to have yet. Who can trust him? Hath he not broken his promise again and again? And if Master-Cromwell, the Lieutenant-General, should spare him and save him, will the army abide it? No; they are, to a man, for trying the King: and they will depose even the General if he thwarteth them; for they cannot count




not swear, I will profess: yea, I profess, I think he will come to great things."

"He hath come to great things already," rejoined the other; "and he will be thy master, and mine—and master of all of us—before long."

"Amen," said Slasher. "By God! after all—I beg your pardon, friend—I *profess*, I believe one master is as good as another, if we must have a master: and the King has been but a sorry master to his faithful servants of late."

Thus in the parlour of the "Three Kings," and in dozens of other similar retreats in London, was the question of King, and Parliament, and army, banded about in hot dispute; and rumours of all sorts, of what the Parliament would do, and what Cromwell would do, and what the King would not do, were flying about. But it was remarkable that all parties ended by concluding that *Cromwell* would do something or other. The name of *Cromwell* was in



every man's mouth, and on him all thoughts were centred: some with exultation, some with fear, but all with expectation.

The truth was, that, so violent had been the animosities created by the war, and so deeply were men of mark and substance among the citizens and officers of rank in the army compromised with the King, that they felt there was no safety for them if the King should return to the throne. Hence the most energetic and active—those who had been, and were, leaders everywhere — looked upon the matter now as a contest for existence between themselves and the King; and the multitude, freed for a long period from the trammels of Government, and excited by continual tumults and continual turmoil, were quite ready to join in the desire for a Commonwealth: in which they expected to be no longer subjected to the insolence of nobles, or the exactions of a kingly government.

Parliament had, however, other interests

and other feelings. Some members were gentlemen of large estate; some, plebeians, borne into the House on the strength of their noisy democracy; and a few of them, thoughtful politicians. Many were desirous, and had all along been desirous, only of curbing the kingly power, and never dreamed of overturning the Constitution: but all had concurred in arrogating to themselves the power which, as it were, dropped into their hands when the Royal power ceased to act with any vigour. And, though the power was exercised with very different motives—in some, from honest conviction, and with a view only to setting the Government on a free and firm and fixed basis; in others, with the selfish greed of personal ambition,—yet all had shared in its exercise.

Parliament had enjoyed, during the long interregnum, the position of King, and more than King, of England. They had levied contributions; they had subsidized and directed armies; they had appointed every officer of

power and emolument in the State: they had, in fact, been kings,—and kings owning little rule but their own. But when the day came—a day which they must have been but short-sighted not to see must come—when the army, the instrument of their power, became itself the ruling power in the State; when they saw that Cromwell, after fighting their battle, was not disposed to tamely yield up the power which the sword gave him, into the hands of the Parliament: that in fact, their servant was becoming their master; then they began to think that they had better support the King: at least so far as to play him off against the army.

Hence the Parliament was now, as a body, averse to the project of bringing the King to trial; a trial which the men amongst them of any sagacity clearly foresaw could not but terminate in his death: and, they saw also that when by his death his cause was completely broken, there would

be nothing to stand between them and their master, Cromwell.

The famous bill for attainting the King was before the House, and Cromwell had been present at a debate—in which, however, he took no part—from which it was obvious that a majority would be against it. The General had thoroughly sounded the army, and he knew that they were determined it should pass; and he returned from the House, with his son-in-law Ireton, much perplexed.

“Come with me, Ireton:” he said, “I would fain discourse with thee of this matter of the King before I act; for action cannot long be delayed. What thinkest thou? Can we let this bill be thrown out with safety? I would fain save the King yet, if it may be.”

“The House is in this matter for the King,” replied Ireton; “and if they are for saving him, I see not why we should press on his destruction.”

Ireton, though a good soldier, did not see very far; and why Cromwell consulted with him is not very explicable: but it is known that he did so frequently.

“Ay,” said the General, “they are for him just now: but why? Because they fear me. But the army and the people, which way do they turn? They are both nearly mad; the army with its continual success, the people with continual license. They are both mad, I say, for the destruction of Royalty, and the establishment of what they expect to be equality; and even I, Ireton, cannot control them, unless I have *more* power. If I allow the Parliament and the King to join, what will be the consequence? I cannot trust the King, should he regain his authority,—that thou knowest: and thou knowest that Charles Stewart is not the man who can bring order out of the disorder that has arisen from this unhappy conflict. If he could not govern when disorders were but brewing, and when he still

appeared to be King, how shall he be expected to reduce to order the chaos created by revolutionary convulsion—to command an army which almost baffles me? Ireton, were I to suffer the Parliament and the King to band together, I should exasperate the army, and revive all the struggles of the war, throw away the fruits of all the blood that has been shed, and of all the sufferings inflicted on this poor people by the disturbance of their trade, and the breaking-up of all their daily business.”

“But thou canst restore the King, under rule and guidance,” urged Ireton: “surely the army will follow thee.”

“If I could trust him, yea,” replied Cromwell; “but thou knowest I cannot: let him but get power again into his hands, and he will forget all that he has promised, and the work will have to be done all over again; and the army and the hot republicans will not abide longer dalliance. What, then, dost thou advise, Ireton?”

---

“Faith!” returned Ireton, “why dost thou ask me? I understand it not. Save the King, or declare against him; thou must do one or the other: and it seemeth to me that either course is not without danger.”

“Danger!” replied Cromwell; “what is danger to me? It hath been my daily bread since I drew the sword: and it is welcome; for I love the stir and turmoil of it. It is not of the danger I am thinking, Ireton, but the issue. If I take part with the King, I doubt whether even I can control the hot army; and then, not my life only—for truly the Lord knows I would peril it for a little matter—but the fate of this people is at stake. The King knoweth not how to reign; and if he is set up again, he will let neither me nor any other man govern him. Yet, on the other hand, if I side not with him, he must perish. It must be so: I cannot let all be lost because one man will be neither true nor wise.”

And Cromwell, having thus cleared his



mind by a conference, in which all the talk had been on his side, took his resolution, and threw himself into the arms of the army against the King, and now against the Parliament; and determined that the bill should pass.

Milk-and-water historians, and sentimental young gentlemen and ladies, will blame him for this, as long as the history of England is read, and as long as people are to be found who think that revolutions are to be managed like balls and picnics. But the Bacons, the Burleighs, the Machiavellis, of future ages,—the men who really deal with state affairs and the fate of nations; or those who, by their strong and plain writings, influence and instruct those who do—will say that Cromwell could not do otherwise than he did; not merely in the interest of his own life and position, but in the interest of the nation.

Having made up his mind, he called no council of officers to ask advice, but deter-

mined alone what was to be done; and he sent for the famous Colonel Pride; famous for the one exploit to which I am about to refer, and, I believe, for that only.

Pride was a furious republican and an uncompromising soldier; therefore was he chosen for this service. Cromwell could be, as we have already noticed, as brief and concise when he chose as he could at other times, when he *chose*, be verbose and difficult to understand. On this occasion he chose to be clear; and his orders were very simple, and worthy of Wellington, in Spartan brevity. He gave the Colonel a list of names of members, adding,

“They are malignants, and the House must be purged of them: thou wilt go with a troop of horse and a regiment of foot, and thou wilt take those men away: they may sit no longer.”

The Colonel did as he was ordered; and then a scene took place, such as history has not often recorded—such as it is not

to be wished it should often have to record—in the annals of representative governments.

Colonel Pride marched with his troop of horse and his regiment of foot, and surrounded the House, placing a strong guard at the doors; then he himself entered the lobby. Remonstrance there was, by the Serjeant-at-arms and the door-keepers; but the answer was simple: "The Lieutenant-General hath ordered it!" and the loaded firelocks and the drawn swords, were an argument that no Parliamentary logic could refute.

The debate had been long and high, and the bill for the attainder of the King, had been discussed with fury and zeal on both sides; but without coming to a division: the House was adjourned, and members came pouring out. One by one, as they passed, they were examined by the Colonel, list in hand; and one by one, as the obnoxious members appeared, they were pointed out, and were in an instant in the hands of the

soldiers, and passed forward to the guard at the doors. Loud and vehement remonstrances there were; and imprecations on the tyrant who dared thus to violate the privilege of the House of Commons. But answer there was none, save the invariable, "The Lord General hath ordered it," and "Ye be no longer fit to sit in the House:" and away they were taken before they could rally or be heard out of doors.

Thus passed the famous elimination of the House of Commons, so well known as "Pride's Purge;" and, until the bill had passed in the remnant of the once proud and powerful, now the tame and subdued, House of Commons, not a man of the unhappy opposition was suffered to go free.

The measure was rather strong, and certainly quaint; but there was a sublime simplicity about it, that utterly refutes the notions so commonly entertained that Cromwell was always crafty, and seeking his ends by means of a circumbendibus. A mere man

of talent would have gone into the House and made a speech, or made a great demonstration with a large force to intimidate the House. But an expedient for creating a majority, so simple, so quick, so effective as that of seizing the opposition, and walking them off bodily to prison, could only be the creation of true genius.

In modern history we have some faint imitations of the great original. Such was that of the dispersing of the Council of Five Hundred by Napoleon; such was that of the swamping of the House of Lords, when, in 1831, King William the Fourth created sixty Peers at one batch to out-vote the majority: but they wanted the magnificent simplicity of the original. In the first case, Napoleon committed the folly of making a speech, and got nearly torn to pieces; in the second, King William's attempt was disfigured by a shew of constitutionality; which shew—hollow shew though it was—detracted from the grandeur of the

act, as a *coup d'état*. The nearest approach to it that I am aware of, is the practice not unknown to both Tories and Whigs; when candidates for Parliament make the free and independent voters of the other side drunk to insensibility, and cart them off to secluded places, and then lock them up till the election is over, and thus create a majority. Still these are but imitations: Cromwell's was the original invention; and, *palmam qui meruit ferat*.

LONDON:  
Printed by SMITH, ELDER, & Co., 15, Old Bailey.







